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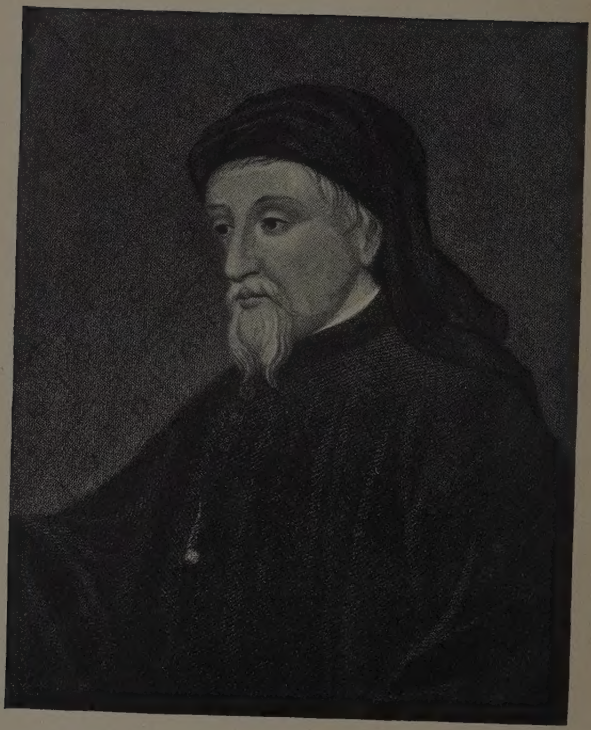

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

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POETICAL WORKS OF GEOFFREY CHAUCER . . . . .

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THE COMPLETE WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

ENGLISH literature, in the strict sense of the word, dates its beginning from the latter half of the fourteenth century. Not but an English literature had existed long previous to that period. Furthermore, it reckoned among its possessions works of value, and a few which in the opinion of some display genius. But though the name was the same, the thing was essentially different. A special course of study is required for any comprehension whatever of the productions of that earliest literature; and for the easy understanding of those written even but a half century or so before the period indicated, a mastery of many peculiar syntactical constructions is demanded, and an acquaintance with a vocabulary differing in a large number of words from that now in use.

But by the middle of the fourteenth century this state of things can hardly be said to exist any longer for us. Everything by that time had become ripe for the creation of a literature of a far higher type than had yet been produced. Furthermore, conditions prevailed which, though their results could not then be foreseen, were almost certain to render the literature thus created comparatively easy of comprehension to the modern reader. The Teutonic and Romanic elements that form the groundwork of our present vocabulary had at last become completely fused. Of the various dialects prevailing, the one spoken in the vicinity of the capital had gradually lifted itself up to a preëminence it was never afterward to lose. In this parent of the present literary speech, writers found for the first time at their command a widely accepted and comparatively flexible instrument of expression. As a consequence, the literature then produced fixed definitely for all time the main lines upon which both the grammar and the vocabulary of the English speech were to develop. The result is that it now presents few difficulties for its full comprehension and appreciation that are not easily surmounted. The most effective deterrent to its wide study is one formidable only in appearance. This is the unfamiliar way in which its words are spelled; for orthography then sought to represent pronunciation, and had not in consequence crystallized into fixed forms with constant disregard of any special value to be attached to the signs by which sounds are denoted.

Of the creators of this literature — Wycliffe, Langland, Chaucer, and Gower — Chaucer was altogether the greatest as a man of letters. This is no mere opinion of the present time; there has never been a period since he flourished in which it has not been fully conceded. In his own day, his fame swept beyond the narrow limits of country and became known to the outside world. At home his reputation was firmly

established, and seems to have been established early. All the references to him by his contemporaries and immediate successors bear witness to his universally recognized position as the greatest of English poets, though we are not left by him to doubt that he had even then met detractors. Still the general feeling of the men of his time is expressed by his disciple Occleve, who terms him —

"The firstè finder[1] of our fair languáge."

Yet not a single incident of his life has come down to us from the men who admired his personality, who enrolled themselves as his disciples, and who celebrated his praises. With the exception of a few slight references to himself in his writings, all the knowledge we possess of the events of his career is due to the mention made of him in official documents of various kinds and of different degrees of importance. In these it is taken for granted that whenever Geoffrey Chaucer is spoken of, it is the poet who is meant, and not another person of the same name. The assumption almost approaches absolute certainty; it does not quite attain to it. In those days it is clear that there were numerous Chaucers. Still, no one has yet risen to dispute his being the very person spoken of in these official papers. From these documents we discover that Chaucer, besides being a poet, was also a man of affairs. He was a soldier, a negotiator, a diplomatist. He was early employed in the personal service of the king. He held various positions in the civil service. It was a consequence that his name should appear frequently in the records. It is upon them, and the references to him in documents covering transactions in which he bore a part, that the story of his life, so far as it exists for us at all, has been mainly built. It was by them also that the series of fictitious events, which for so long a time did duty as the biography of the poet, had their impossibility as well as their absurdity exposed.

The exact date of Chaucer's birth we do not know. The most that can be said is that it must have been somewhere in the early years of the reign of Edward III. (1327–77). The place of his birth was in all probability London. His father, John Chaucer, was a vintner of that city, and there is evidence to indicate that he was to some extent connected with the court. In a deed dated June 19, 1380, the poet released his right to his father's former house, which is described as being in Thames Street. The spot, however unsuitable for a dwelling-place now, was then in the very heart of urban life, and in that very neighborhood it is reasonable to suppose that Chaucer's earliest years were spent.

The first positive information we have, however, about the poet himself, belongs to 1356. In that year we find him attached to the household of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the third son of Edward III. He is there in the service of the wife of that prince, but in what position we do not know. It may have been that of a page. He naturally was in attendance upon his mistress during her various journeyings; but most of her time was passed at her residence in Hatfield, Yorkshire. Chaucer next appears as having joined the army of Edward III. in his last invasion of France. This expedition was undertaken in the autumn of 1359, and continued until the peace of Bretigny, concluded in May, 1360. During this campaign he was captured somewhere and somehow — we have no knowledge beyond the bare fact. It took place,

[1] Poet.

however, before the 1st of March, 1360; for on that date the records show that the King personally contributed sixteen pounds toward his ransom.

From the last-mentioned date Chaucer drops entirely out of our knowledge till June, 1367, when he is mentioned as one of the valets of the King's chamber. In the document stating this fact he is granted a pension — the first of several he received — for services already rendered or to be rendered. It is a natural inference from the language employed, that during these years of which no record exists he was in some situation about the person of Edward III. After this time his name occurs with considerable frequency in the rolls, often connected with duties to which he was assigned. His services were varied; in some instances certainly they were of importance. From 1370 to 1380 he was sent several times abroad to share in the conduct of negotiations. These missions led him to Flanders, to France, and to Italy. The subjects were diverse. One of the negotiations in which he was concerned was in reference to the selection of an English port for a Genoese commercial establishment; another was concerning the marriage of the young monarch of England with the daughter of the King of France. It is on his first journey to Italy of which we have any record — the mission of 1372–73 to Genoa and Florence — that everybody hopes and some succeed in having an undoubting belief that Chaucer visited Petrarch at Padua, and there heard from him the story of Griselda, which the Clerk of Oxford in "The Canterbury Tales" states that he learned from the Italian poet. Faith in this meeting has been rendered more difficult to accept, however, by the recently discovered fact that Chaucer was absent on this mission less than six months, instead of the eleven months with which he previously had been credited.

But Chaucer's activity was not confined to foreign missions or to diplomacy; he was as constantly employed in the civil service. In 1374 he was made controller of the great customs — that is, of wool, skins, and leather — of the port of London. In 1382 he received also the post at the same port of controller of the petty customs, that is, of wines, candles, and other articles. The regulations of this office required him to write the records with his own hand; and it is this to which Chaucer is supposed to refer in the statement he makes about his official duties in "The Hous of Fame." In this poem the messenger of Jupiter tells him that though he has done so much in the service of the God of Love, yet he has never received for it any compensation. He then goes on to add the following lines, which give a graphic picture of the poet and of his studious life: —

"'Wherfor, as I seyde, y-wis,
Iupiter considereth this,
And also, beau sir, other thinges;
That is, that thou hast no tydinges
Of Loves folk, if they be glade,
Ne of noght elles that god made;
And noght only fro fer contree
That ther no tyding comth to thee,
But of thy verray neyghebores,
That dwellen almost at thy dores,
Thou herest neither that ne this;
For whan thy labour doon al is,

And hast y-maad thy rekeninges,
In stede of reste and newe thinges,
Thou gost hoom to thy hous anoon;
And, also domb as any stoon,
Thou sittest at another boke,
Til fully daswed is thy loke,
And livest thus as an hermyte,
Although thyn abstinence is lyte.'"

The Hous of Fame, ll. 641–660.

In 1386 Chaucer was elected to Parliament as knight of the shire for the county of Kent. In that same year he lost or gave up both his positions in the customs. The cause we do not know. It may have been due to mismanagement on his own part; it is far more likely that he fell a victim to one of the fierce factional disputes that were going on during the minority of Richard II. At any rate, from this time, he disappears for two years from our knowledge. But in 1389 he is mentioned as having been appointed clerk of the King's works at Westminster and various other places; in 1390 clerk of the works for St. George's chapel at Windsor. Both of these positions he held until the middle of 1391. In this last year he was made one of the commissioners to repair the roadway along the Thames, and at about the same time was appointed forester of North Petherton Park in Somerset, a post which he held till his death. After 1386 he seems at times to have been in pecuniary difficulties. To what cause they were owing, or how severe they were, it is the emptiest of speculations to form any conjectures in the obscurity that envelops this portion of his life. Whatever may have been his situation, on the accession of Henry IV. in September, 1399, his fortunes revived. The father of that monarch was John of Gaunt, the fourth son of Edward III. That nobleman had pretty certainly been from the outset the patron of Chaucer; it is possible — as the evidence fails on one side, it cannot be regarded as proved — that by his marriage with Katharine Swynford he became the poet's brother-in-law. Whatever may have been the relationship, if any at all, it is a fact that one of the very first things the new king did was to confer upon Chaucer an additional pension. But the poet did not live long to enjoy the favor of the monarch. On the 24th of December, 1399, he leased for fifty-three years, or during the term of his life, a tenement in the garden of St. Mary's Chapel, Westminster. But after the 5th of June, 1400, his name appears no longer on any rolls. There is accordingly no reason to question the accuracy of the inscription on his tombstone which represents him as having died October 25, 1400. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. He was the first, and still remains perhaps the greatest, of the English poets whose bones have there found their last resting-place.

This comprises all the facts of importance we know of Chaucer's life. Before leaving this branch of the subject, however, it may be well to say that many fuller details about his career can be found in all older accounts of the poet, and in spite of the repeated exposure of their falsity still crop up occasionally in modern books of reference. Some are objectionable only upon the ground of being untrue. Of these are such statements as that he was born in 1328; that he was a student of Oxford, to which Cambridge is sometimes added; that he was created poet-laureate; and that he was knighted. But others are objectionable not only on the ground of being false,

but of being slanderous besides. Of these the most offensive is the widely circulated and circumstantial story that he was concerned in the conflict that went on in 1382 between the city of London and the court in regard to the election of John of Northampton to the mayoralty; that in consequence of his participation in this contest he was compelled to seek refuge in the island of Zealand; that there he remained for some time, but on his return to England was arrested and thrown into the Tower; and that after having been imprisoned for two or three years, he was released at last on the condition of betraying his associates, which he accordingly did. All these details are fictitious. They were made up from inferences drawn from obscure passages in a prose work entitled "The Testament of Love." This was once attributed to the poet, but is now known not to have been written by him. Even had it been his, the statements derived from it and applied to the life of the poet would have been entirely unwarranted, as they come into constant conflict with the official records. Not being his, this piece of spurious biography has the additional discredit of constituting an unnecessary libel upon his character.

From Chaucer the man, and the man of affairs, we proceed now to the consideration of Chaucer the writer. He has left behind a body of verse consisting of more than thirty-two thousand lines, and a smaller but still far from inconsiderable quantity of prose. The latter consists mainly if not wholly of translations — one a version of that favorite work of the Middle Ages, the treatise of Boethius on the "Consolation of Philosophy"; another the tale of Melibeus in "The Canterbury Tales," which is taken directly from the French; thirdly, "The Persones Tale," derived probably from the same quarter, though its original has not as yet been discovered with certainty; and, fourthly, an unfinished treatise on the Astrolabe, undertaken for the instruction of his son Lewis. The prose of any literature always lags behind, and sometimes centuries behind, its poetry. It is therefore not surprising to find Chaucer displaying in the former comparatively little of the peculiar excellence which distinguishes his verse. In the latter but little room is found for hostile criticism. In the more than thirty thousand lines of which it is composed there occur, of course, inferior passages, and some positively weak; but taking it all in all, there is but little in it, considered as a whole, which the lover of literature as literature finds it advisable or necessary to skip. As Southey remarked, Chaucer, with the exception of Shakespeare, is the most various of all English authors. He appeals to the most diversified tastes. He wrote love poems, religious poems, allegorical poems, occasional poems, tales of common life, tales of chivalry. His range is so wide that any limited selection from his works can at best give but an inadequate idea of the variety and extent of his powers.

The canon of Chaucer's writings has now been settled with a reasonable degree of certainty. For a long time the fashion existed of imputing to him the composition of any English poem of the century following his death, which was floating about without having attached to it the name of any author. The consequence is that the older editions contain a mass of matter which it would have been distinctly discreditable for any one to have produced, let alone a great poet. This has now been gradually dropped, much to the advantage of Chaucer's reputation, though modern scholarship also refuses to admit the production by him of two or three pieces, such as "The Court of Love," "The Flower and the Leaf," "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale," none of which was unworthy of his powers. It is possible, indeed, that the poet himself may

have had some dread of being saddled with the responsibility of having produced pieces which he did not care to father. It is certainly suggestive that he himself took the pains on one occasion to furnish what it seems must have been at the time a fairly complete list of his writings. In the prologue to "The Legend of Good Women" he gave an idea of the work which up to that period he had accomplished. The God of Love, in the interview which is there described as having taken place, inveighs against the poet for having driven men away from the service due to his deity, by the character of what he had written. He says: —

> "Thou mayst hit nat denye;
> For in pleyn text, with-outen nede of glose,
> Thou hast translated the Romaunce of the Rose,
> That is an heresye ageyns my lawe,
> And makest wyse folk fro me withdrawe.
> And of Criseyde thou hast seyd as thee liste,
> That maketh men to wommen lasse triste,
> That ben as trewe as ever was any steel."
>
> *The Legend of Good Women*, ll. 327–334.

Against this charge the queen Alcestis is represented as interposing to the god a defence of the poet, in which occurs the following account of Chaucer's writings: —

> "Al be hit that he can nat well endyte,
> Yet hath he maked lewed folk delyte
> To serve you, in preysing of your name.
> He made the book that hight the Hous of Fame,
> And eek the Deeth of Blaunche the Duchesse,
> And the Parlement of Foules, as I gesse,
> And al the love of Palamon and Arcyte
> Of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen lyte;
> And many an ympne for your halydayes,
> That highten Balades, Roundels, Virelayes;
> And, for to speke of other holynesse,
> He hath in prose translated Boëce,
> And mad the Lyf also of seynt Cecyle;
> He made also, goon sithen a greet whyl,
> Origenes upon the Maudeleyne;
> Him oghte now to have the lesse peyne;
> He hath mad many a lay and many a thing."
>
> *The Legend of Good Women*, ll. 414–430.

This prologue is generally conceded to have been written between 1382 and 1385. Though it does not profess to furnish a complete list of Chaucer's writings, it can fairly be assumed that it included all which he then regarded as of importance, either on account of their merit or their length. If so, the titles given above would embrace the productions of what may be called the first half of his literary career. In fact, his disciple Lydgate leads us to believe that "Troïlus and Criseyde" was a comparatively early production, though it may have undergone, and probably did undergo, revision before assuming its present form. "The Legend of Good Women" — in distinction from its prologue — would naturally occupy the time of the poet

during the opening period of what is here termed the second half of his literary career. The prologue is the only portion of it, however, that is of distinctly high merit. The work was never completed, and Chaucer pretty certainly came soon to the conclusion that it was not worth completing. It was in the taste of the times; but it did not take him long to perceive that an extended work, dealing exclusively with the sorrows of particular individuals, was as untrue to art as it was to life. It fell under the ban of that criticism which in "The Canterbury Tales" he puts into the mouth of the Knight, who interrupts the doleful recital of the tragical tales told by the Monk with these words: —

> "'Ho!' quod the knight, 'good sir, namore of this,
> That ye han seyd is right y-nough, y-wis,
> And mochel more; for litel hevinesse
> Is right y-nough to mochel folk, I gesse.
> I seye for me, it is a greet disese
> Wher-as men han ben in greet welthe and ese,
> To heren of hir sodeyn fal, allas!
> And the contrarie is Ioie and greet solas,
> As whan a man hath been in povre estaat,
> And clymbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,
> And ther abydeth in prosperitee,
> Swich thing is gladsom, as it thinketh me,
> And of swich thing were goodly for to telle.'"
>
> *The Canterbury Tales*, B, ll. 3957–3969.

Accordingly, from the composition of pieces of the one-sided and unsatisfactory character of those contained in "The Legend of Good Women," Chaucer turned to the preparation of his great work, "The Canterbury Tales." This gave him the fullest opportunity to display all his powers, and must have constituted the main literary occupation of his later life.

It will be noticed that two of the works mentioned in the prologue to "The Legend of Good Women" are translations, and are so avowed. One is of "The Romaunt of the Rose," and the other of the philosophical treatise of Boethius. In regard to the version of the former, which has come down, it is sufficient to say that there was not long ago a disposition to deny the genuineness of all of it. This now contents itself with denying the genuineness of part of it. The question cannot be considered here; it is enough to say that in the opinion of the present writer, while the subject is attended with certain difficulties, the evidence is very strongly in favor of Chaucer's composition of the whole. But setting aside discussion of this point, there can scarcely be any doubt that Chaucer began his career as a translator. At the period he flourished he could hardly have done otherwise. It was an almost inevitable method of procedure on the part of a man who found neither writers nor writings in his own tongue worthy of imitation, and who could not fail to be struck not merely by the excellence of the Latin classic poets, but also by the superior culture of the Continent. In the course of his literary development he would naturally pass from direct translation to adaptation. To the latter practice he assuredly resorted often. He took the work of the foreign author as a basis, discarded what he did not need or care for, and added as little or as much as suited his own convenience. In this way the

5704 lines of the "Filostrato" of Boccaccio became 8246 in the "Troilus and Criseyde" of Chaucer; but even of the 5704 of the Italian poet, 2974 were not used by the English poet at all, and the 2730 that were used underwent considerable compression. In a similar way he composes "The Knightes Tale," probably the most perfect narrative poem in our tongue. It was based upon the "Theseide" of Boccaccio. But the latter has 9896 lines, while the former comprises but 2250, and of these 2250 fully two-thirds are entirely independent of the Italian poem.

With such free treatment of his material, Chaucer's next step would be to direct composition, independent of any sources, save in that general way in which every author is under obligation to what has been previously produced. This finds its crowning achievement in "The Canterbury Tales," though several earlier pieces — such as "The Hous of Fame," "The Parlement of Foules," and the prologue to "The Legend of Good Women" — attest that long before he had shown his ability to produce work essentially original. But though in his literary development Chaucer worked himself out of this exact reproduction of his models, through a partial working over of them till he finally attained complete independence, the habit of a translator clung to him to the very end. Even after he had fully justified his claim to being a great original poet, passages occur in his writings which are nothing but the reproduction of passages found in some foreign poem in Latin, or French, or Italian, the three languages with which he was conversant. His translation of them was due to the fact that they had struck his fancy; his insertion of them into his own work was to please others with what had previously pleased himself. Numerous passages of this kind have been pointed out; and doubtless there are others which remain to be pointed out.

There is another important thing to be marked in the history of Chaucer's development. Not only was poetic material lacking in the tongue at the time of his appearance, but also poetic form. The measures in use, while not inadequate for literary expression, were incapable of embodying it in its highest flights. Consequently, what Chaucer did not find, he had either to borrow or to invent. He did both. In the lines which have been quoted he speaks of the "balades, roundels, and virelayes," which he had composed. These were all favorite poetical forms in that Continental country with whose literature Chaucer was mainly conversant. There can be little question that he tried all manner of verse which the ingenuity of the poets of northern France had devised. As many of his shorter pieces have very certainly disappeared, his success in these various attempts cannot be asserted with positiveness. Still, what have survived show that he was a great literary artist as well as a great poet. His feats of rhyming, in particular in a tongue so little fitted for it as is ours, can be seen in his unfinished poem of "Anelida and Arcite," in "The Compleynt of Venus," and in the envoy which follows "The Clerkes Tale." In this last piece, though there are thirty-six lines, the rhymes are only three; and two of these belong to fifteen lines respectively.

But far more important than such attempts, which prove interest in versification rather than great poetic achievement, are the two measures which he introduced into our tongue. The first was the seven-line stanza. The rhyming lines in it are respectively the first and third; the second, fourth, and fifth; and the sixth and seventh. At a later period this was frequently called "rhyme royal," because the "Kingis

Quair" was written in it. For fully two centuries it was one of the most popular measures in English poetry. Since the sixteenth century, however, it has been but little employed. Far different has been the fate of the line of ten syllables, or rather of five accents. On account of its frequent use in "The Canterbury Tales" it was called for a long period, "riding rhyme"; but it now bears the title of "heroic verse." As employed by Chaucer, it varies in slight particulars from the way it is now generally used. With him the couplet character was never made prominent. The sense was not apt to end at the second line, but constantly tended to run over into the line following. There was also frequently with him an unaccented eleventh syllable; and this, though not unknown to modern verse, is not common. Still, the difference between the early and the later form are mere differences of detail, and of comparatively unimportant detail. The introduction of this measure into English may be considered Chaucer's greatest achievement in the matter of versification. The heroic verse may have existed in the tongue before he himself used it. If so, it lurked unseen and uninfluential. He was the first to employ it on a grand scale, if not to employ it at all, and to develop its capabilities. Much the largest proportion of his greatest work is written in that measure. Yet in spite of his example, it found for two centuries comparatively few imitators. It was not till the end of the sixteenth century that the measure started on a new course of life, and entered upon the great part it has since played in English versification.

The most important of what are sometimes called the minor works of Chaucer are "The Parlement of Foules," "The Hous of Fame," "Troilus and Criseyde," and "The Legend of Good Women." These are all favorable examples of his genius. But however good they may be in particular portions and in particular respects, in general excellence they yield place unquestionably to "The Canterbury Tales." It seems to have been very clearly the intention of the poet to embody in this crowning achievement of his literary life everything in the shape of a story he had already composed or was purposing to compose. Two of the pieces, the story of "Palemon and Arcite," and the "Life of St. Cecilia," as we know from the words of his already quoted, had appeared long before. The plan of the work itself was most happily conceived; and in spite of most painstaking efforts to find an original for it or suggestion of it somewhere else, there seems no sufficient reason for doubting that the poet himself was equal to the task of having devised it. No one can certainly question the felicity with which the framework for embodying the tales was constructed. All ranks and classes of society are brought together in the company of pilgrims who assemble at the Tabard Inn at Southwark to ride to the shrine of the saint at Canterbury. The military class is represented by the Knight, belonging to the highest order of the nobility, his son the Squire, and his retainer the Yeoman; the church by the Abbot, the Friar, the Parson, the Prioress with her attendant Nun, and the three accompanying Priests, and less distinctly by the Scholar, the Clerk of Oxford, and by the Pardoner and the Summoner. For the other professions are the Doctor of Physic and the Serjeant of Law; for the middle-class landholders, the Franklin; and for the various crafts and occupations, the Haberdasher, the Carpenter, the Weaver, the Dyer, the Upholsterer, the Cook, the Ploughman, the Sailor, the Reeve, the Manciple, and (joining the party in the course of the pilgrimage) the assistant of the alchemist, who is called the Canon's Yeoman. Into the mouths of these various personages were to be put tales befitting

their character and condition. Consequently, there was ample space for stories of chivalry, of religion, of love, of magic, and in truth of every aspect of social life in all its highest and lowest manifestations. Between the tales themselves were connecting links, in which the poet had the opportunity to give an account of the incidents that took place on the pilgrimage, the critical opinions expressed by the hearers of what had been told, and the disputes and quarrels that went on between various members of the party. So far as this portion of his plan was finished, these connecting links furnish some of the most striking passages in the work. In one of them — the prologue to "The Tale of the Wyf of Bathe" — the genius of the poet reaches along certain lines its highest development; while the general prologue describing the various personages of the party, though not containing the highest poetry of the work as poetry, is the most acute, discriminating, and brilliant picture of men and manners that can be found in our literature.

Such was the plan of the work. It was laid out on an extensive scale, perhaps on too extensive a scale ever to have been completed. Certain it is that it was very far from ever reaching even remotely that result. According to the scheme set forth in the prologue, the work when finished should have included over one hundred and twenty tales. It actually comprises but twenty-four. Even of these, two are incomplete: "The Cokes Tale," which is little more than begun, and the romantic Eastern "Squieres Tale," which, in Milton's words, is "left half told." To those that are finished, the connecting links have not been supplied in many cases. Accordingly, the work exists not as a perfect whole, but in eight or nine fragmentary parts, each complete in itself, but lacking a close connection with the others, though all are bound together by the unity of a common central interest. The value of what has been done makes doubly keen the regret that so much has been left undone. Politics, religion, literature, manners, are all touched upon in this wide-embracing view, which still never misses what is really essential; and added to this is a skill of portrayal by which the actors, whether narrating the tales, or themselves forming the heroes of the narration, fairly live and breathe before our eyes. Had the work been completed on the scale upon which it was begun, we should have had a picture of life and opinion in the fourteenth century more vivid and exact than has been drawn of any century before or since.

A common impression prevails that Chaucer is a very difficult author to read or understand. Nothing could be much farther from the truth. The belief is due, as has been remarked previously, to the unfamiliar orthography more than to any other one thing. It is strange; it looks uncouth, and therefore is deemed hard. But all difficulties arising from this source disappear after very brief study. On the other hand, Chaucer's style, like that of all early writers of genius, is characterized by perfect simplicity and by consequent clearness of expression. There are very few sentences over which the reader who understands the words has to linger long in order to understand the meaning, Of course, like every early author, his language presents certain difficulties of its own. There are found in it words which have now gone out of use, and words which while still in use have changed their signification. But familiarity with all of these is a mere matter of detail and can be acquired with comparative ease.

Somewhat more serious difficulties belong to the grammar and to the metre. It

may be therefore worth while to specify the most frequently recurring variations from modern usage, that are apt at the outset to embarrass the one seeking acquaintance with the poet. There is first the general statement that the inflections are fuller than in the English of to-day. Thus the plural of the noun is usually *-es* instead of the simple *-s*. In a similar way in the case of the verb we find occasionally full forms for the preterit plural as *loveden* for *loved*. All such differences are so easily comprehended that it is only necessary here to call attention to the fact of their existence. There are, however, certain peculiar variations from modern grammar which occur constantly, and these it will be well to specify particularly.

In the case of the noun, a few, which are now regularly inflected, retained then the old plural in *-en*. Illustrations are *assen*, 'asses'; *been*, 'bees'; *ton*, *toon*, 'toes'; *fon*, 'foes'; and so forth.

In the case of the pronoun the plural of the pronoun of the third person is *they*, *hire* (variants *here*, *hir*, *her*), *hem*, instead of *they*, *their*, *them*. The nominative plural of the pronoun of the second person is always *ye*; *you* is invariably the objective. Also, *that—he*, *that—his*, and *that—him* constitute a relative equivalent to *who*, *whose*, *whom*. The dash indicates that a number of words intervene between the two parts of the compound relative. *That* is the ordinary relative, but before *oon* and *other* it is the definite article.

In the case of the adjective, *long* and *strong* have for their comparative *lenger* and *strenger*. A few adjectives also retain the old comparative form in *-re*, as *derre*, 'dearer'; *nerre* (*ner*), 'nearer'; *ferre*, 'farther'; *herre*, 'higher', and so forth.

In the case of the verb, the third person singular of the present tense, which regularly ends in *-th*, undergoes contraction in certain verbs whose root ends in *d* or *t*, and occasionally in *s*. Hence we have such forms as *bit*, 'bids'; *halt*, 'holds'; *rist*, 'rises'; *sit*, 'sits'; *stont*, 'stands'; and *writ*, 'writes'. The plural of the present tense occasionally ends in *-th* as *they loveth*. The imperative plural ends regularly in *-th*. The past participle of the strong verb frequently drops the final *n*, especially when preceded by the prefix *y* or *i*, as for illustration, *yfalle*, 'fallen'; *ydrawe*, 'drawn'; *yshake*, 'shaken.'

The general negative is *ne*, which is sometimes also equivalent to 'nor.' Connected with the verbs 'be' and 'have', *ne* gives us such forms as *nis*, 'is not'; *nas*, 'was not'; *nath*, 'hath not,' and *nadde* (*nad'*), 'had not.' The double negative never has an affirmative sense; it always strengthens the negation. Finally, *as* is frequently an expletive, especially with the imperative, and cannot be rendered at all.

In regard to metre two general rules are to be observed. The first is that the final *-e* — the remnant of the old inflection — is to be pronounced when the next word begins with a consonant. On the other hand, it is not pronounced when that word begins with a vowel or *h* mute. To this rule there are occasional exceptions, a knowledge of which can only be gained by observation and practice. Still it may be helpful to add that certain very common words — such as *oure*, *youre*, and *hire* ('their') — rarely, if ever, have the final *-e* pronounced under any circumstances. Again, in certain very common words the *-e* is pronounced or not, according to the requirements of the verse. For instance, the preterit *hadde*, 'had,' may be treated as a monosyllable or as a dissyllable.

The second rule is that a word is frequently accented on a different syllable from that which receives it in modern English. This syllable in Chaucer is usually the last, as may be seen in words like *honour*, *nature*, *governour*. In some dissyllabic words, however, the accent may be upon the first or second syllable to suit the requirements of the metre. To this it may be added that certain words consist of more syllables in Chaucer than in modern English. Thus *creature* is pronounced *cre-a-ture* with the principal accent on the final syllable. Similarly, *condition* is a word of four syllables, *con-dit-i-on*, — or *con-dic-i-oun* in Chaucer spelling, — the accent resting on the second and fourth syllables.

A few lines divided into feet are here given to illustrate some of the preceding statements. It is of course to be borne in mind that the second syllable of the foot is regularly the one accented.

"Whylom, | as old|e stor|ies tell|en us|,
Ther was | a duk | that hight|e Thes|eus|."
The Canterbury Tales, A, ll. 859, 860.

"Why ne hadde (=nad) | I now | thy sen|tence and | thy lore|,
The Fri|day for | to chyde, | as did|en ye| ?"
The Canterbury Tales, B, ll. 4540, 4541.

"That lord | hath lit|el of | discrec|ioun|,
That in | swich cas | can no | divis|ioun|."
The Canterbury Tales, A, ll. 1779, 1780.

"And bath|ed eve|ry veyne | in swich | licour|,
Of which | vertu | engend|red is | the flour|."
The Canterbury Tales, A, ll. 3, 4.

"Souninge | in mor|al ver|tu was | his spech|e,
And gl|ad|ly wolde | he lerne, | and glad|ly tech|e."
The Canterbury Tales, A, ll. 307, 308.

"Noght grev|eth us | your glor|ie and your | honour|;
But we | bisek|en mer|cy and | socour|."
The Canterbury Tales, A, ll. 917, 918.

In conclusion, it is never to be forgotten that Chaucer has no superior in the English tongue as a master of melody; and if a verse of his sounds inharmonious, it is either because the line is corrupt or because the reader has not succeeded in pronouncing it correctly.

THOMAS R. LOUNSBURY.

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

FRAGMENT A.

MANY men seyn that in sweveninges
Ther nis but fables and lesinges;
But men may somme swevenes seen,
Which hardely ne false been,
But afterward ben apparaunte.
This may I drawe to warauntе
An authour, that hight Macrobes,
That halt not dremes false ne lees,
But undoth us the avisioun
That whylom mette king Cipioun.
And who-so sayth, or weneth it be
A Iape, or elles [a] nycetee
To wene that dremes after falle,
Let who-so liste a fool me calle.
For this trowe I, and say for me,
That dremes signifiaunce be
Of good and harme to many wightes,
That dremen in her slepe a-nightes
Ful many thinges covertly,
That fallen after al openly.
Within my twenty yere of age,
Whan that Love taketh his corage
Of yonge folk, I wente sone
To bedde, as I was wont to done,
And fast I sleep; and in sleping,
Me mette swiche a swevening,
That lykede me wonders wel;
But in that sweven is never a del
That it nis afterward befalle,
Right as this dreem wol telle us alle.
Now this dreem wol I ryme aright,
To make your hertes gaye and light;
For Love it prayeth, and also
Commaundeth me that it be so
And if ther any aske me,
Whether that it be he or she,
How [that] this book [the] which is here
Shal hote, that I rede you here;
It is the Romance of the Rose,
In which al the art of love I close.
The mater fair is of to make;
God graunte in gree that she it take
For whom that it begonnen is!
And that is she that hath, y-wis,
So mochel prys; and ther-to she
So worthy is biloved be,
That she wel oughte, of prys and right,
Be cleped Rose of every wight.
That it was May me thoughte tho,
It is fyve yere or more ago;
That it was May, thus dremed me,
In tyme of love and lolitee,
That al thing ginneth waxen gay,
For ther is neither busk nor hay
In May, that it nil shrouded been,
And it with newe leves wreen.
These wodes eek recoveren grene,
That drye in winter been to sene;
And the erthe wexeth proud withalle,
For swote dewes that on it falle,
And [al] the pore estat forget
In which that winter hadde it set,
And than bicometh the ground so proud
That it wol have a newe shroud,
And maketh so queynt his robe and fayr
That it hath hewes an hundred payr
Of gras and floures, inde and pers,
And many hewes ful dyvers:
That is the robe I mene, y-wis,
Through which the ground to preisen is.
The briddes, that han left hir song,
Whyl they han suffred cold so strong
In wedres grille, and derk to sighte,
Ben in May, for the sonne brighte,
So glade, that they shewe in singing,
That in hir herte is swich lyking,
That they mote singen and be light.
Than doth the nightingale hir might

To make noyse, and singen blythe.
Than is blisful, many a sythe,
The chelaundre and the papingay.
Than yonge folk entenden ay
For to ben gay and amorous,
The tyme is than so savorous.
Hard is his herte that loveth nought
In May, whan al this mirth is wrought;
Whan he may on these braunches here
The smale briddes singen clere
Hir blisful swete song pitous;
And in this sesoun delytous,
Whan love affrayeth alle thing,
Me thoughte a-night, in my sleping,
Right in my bed, ful redily,
That it was by the morowe erly,
And up I roos, and gan me clothe;
Anoon I wissh myn hondes bothe;
A sylvre nedle forth I drogh
Out of an aguiler queynt y-nogh,
And gan this nedle threde anon;
For out of toun me list to gon
The sowne of briddes for to here,
That on thise busshes singen clere.
And in the swete sesoun that leef is,
With a threde basting my slevis,
Aloon I wente in my playing,
The smale foules song harkning;
That peyned hem ful many a payre
To singe on bowes blosmed fayre.
Iolif and gay, ful of gladnesse,
Toward a river I gan me dresse,
That I herde renne faste by;
For fairer playing non saugh I
Than playen me by that riveer,
For from an hille that stood ther neer
Cam doun the streem ful stif and bold.
Cleer was the water, and as cold
As any welle is, sooth to seyne;
And somdel lasse it was than Seine,
But it was straighter wel away.
And never saugh I, er that day,
The water that so wel lyked me;
And wonder glad was I to see
That lusty place, and that riveer;
And with that water that ran so cleer
My face I wissh. Tho saugh I wel
The botme paved everydel
With gravel, ful of stones shene.
The medewe softe, swote, and grene,
Beet right on the water-syde.
Ful cleer was than the morow-tyde,
And ful attempre, out of drede.

Tho gan I walke through the mede.
Dounward ay in my pleying,
The river-syde costeying.
And whan I had a whyle goon,
I saugh a GARDIN right anoon,
Ful long and brood, and everydel
Enclos it was, and walled wel,
With hye walles enbatailled,
Portrayed without, and wel entailled
With many riche portraitures;
And bothe images and peyntures
Gan I biholde bisily.
And I wol telle you, redily,
Of thilke images the semblaunce,
As fer as I have remembraunce.
A-midde saugh I HATE stonde,
That for hir wrathe, ire, and onde,
Semed to been a moveresse,
An angry wight, a chideresse;
And ful of gyle, and fel corage,
By semblaunt was that ilke image.
And she was no-thing wel arrayed,
But lyk a wood womman afrayed;
Y-frounced foule was hir visage,
And grenning for dispitous rage;
Hir nose snorted up for tene.
Ful hidous was she for to sene,
Ful foul and rusty was she, this.
Hir heed y-writhen was, y-wis,
Ful grimly with a greet towayle.
An image of another entayle,
A lift half, was hir faste by;
Hir name above hir heed saugh I,
And she was called FELONYE.
Another image, that VILANYE
Y-cleped was, saugh I and fond
Upon the walle on hir right hond.
Vilanye was lyk somdel
That other image; and, trusteth wel,
She semed a wikked creature.
By countenaunce, in portrayture,
She semed be ful despitous,
And eek ful proud and outrageous.
Wel coude he peynte, I undertake,
That swiche image coude make.
Ful foul and cherlish semed she,
And eek vilaynous for to be,
And litel coude of norture,
To worshipe any creature.
And next was peynted COVEITYSE,
That eggeth folk, in many gyse,
To take and yeve right nought ageyn,
And grete tresours up to leyn.

And that is she that for usure
Leneth to many a creature
The lasse for the more winning,
So coveitous is her brenning.
And that is she, for penyes fele,
That techeth for to robbe and stele
These theves, and these smale harlotes;
And that is routhe, for by hir throtes
Ful many oon hangeth at the laste.
She maketh folk compasse and caste
To taken other folkes thing,
Through robberie, or miscounting.
And that is she that maketh trechoures;
And she [that] maketh false pledoures,
That with hir termes and hir domes
Doon maydens, children, and eek gromes
Hir heritage to forgo.
Ful croked were hir hondes two;
For Coveityse is ever wood
To grypen other folkes good.
Coveityse, for hir winning,
Ful leef hath other mennes thing.
Another image set saugh I
Next Coveityse faste by,
And she was cleped AVARICE.
Ful foul in peynting was that vice;
Ful sad and caytif was she eek,
And al-so grene as any leek.
So yvel hewed was hir colour,
Hir semed have lived in langour.
She was lyk thing for hungre deed,
That ladde hir lyf only by breed
Kneden with eisel strong and egre;
And therto she was lene and megre.
And she was clad ful povrely,
Al in an old torn courtepy,
As she were al with dogges torn;
And bothe bihinde and eek biforn
Clouted was she beggarly.
A mantel heng hir faste by,
Upon a perche, weyke and smalle;
A burnet cote heng therwithalle,
Furred with no menivere,
But with a furre rough of here,
Of lambe-skinnes hevy and blake;
It was ful old, I undertake.
For Avarice to clothe hir wel
Ne hasteth hir, never a del;
For certeynly it were hir loth
To weren ofte that ilke cloth;
And if it were forwered, she
Wolde have ful greet necessitee
Of clothing, er she boughte hir newe,
Al were it bad of wolle and hewe.
This Avarice held in hir hande
A purs, that heng [doun] by a bande;
And that she hidde and bond so stronge,
Men must abyde wonder longe
Out of that purs er ther come ought,
For that ne cometh not in hir thought;
It was not, certein, hir entente
That fro that purs a peny wente.
And by that image, nygh y-nough,
Was peynt ENVYE, that never lough,
Nor never wel in herte ferde
But-if she outher saugh or herde
Som greet mischaunce, or greet disese.
No-thing may so moch hir plese
As mischef and misaventure;
Or whan she seeth discomfiture
Upon any worthy man falle,
Than lyketh hir [ful] wel withalle.
She is ful glad in hir corage,
If she see any greet linage
Be brought to nought in shamful wyse.
And if a man in honour ryse,
Or by his witte, or by prowesse,
Of that hath she gret hevinesse;
For, trusteth wel, she goth nigh wood
Whan any chaunce happeth good.
Envye is of swich crueltee,
That feith ne trouthe holdeth she
To freend ne felawe, bad or good.
Ne she hath kin noon of hir blood,
That she nis ful hir enemy;
She nolde, I dar seyn hardely,
Hir owne fader ferde wel.
And sore abyeth she everydel
Hir malice, and hir maltalent;
For she is in so greet turment
And hath such [wo], whan folk doth good,
That nigh she melteth for pure wood;
Hir herte kerveth and to-breketh
That god the peple wel awreketh.
Envye, y-wis, shal never lette
Som blame upon the folk to sette.
I trowe that if Envye, y-wis,
Knewe the beste man that is
On this syde or biyond the see,
Yit somwhat lakken him wolde she.
And if he were so hende and wys,
That she ne mighte al abate his prys,
Yit wolde she blame his worthinesse,
Or by hir wordes make it lesse.

I saugh Envye, in that peynting,
Hadde a wonderful loking;
For she ne loked but awry,
Or overthwart, al baggingly.
And she hadde [eek] a foul usage;
She mighte loke in no visage
Of man or womman forth-right pleyn,
But shette oon yë for disdeyn;
So for envye brenned she
Whan she mighte any man [y]-see,
That fair, or worthy were, or wys,
Or elles stood in folkes prys.

Sorowe was peynted next Envye
Upon that walle of masonrye.
But wel was seen in hir colour
That she hadde lived in langour;
Hir semed have the Iaunyce.
Nought half so pale was Avaryce,
Nor no-thing lyk, [as] of lenesse;
For sorowe, thought, and greet distresse,
That she hadde suffred day and night
Made hir ful yelwe, and no-thing bright,
Ful fade, pale, and megre also.
Was never wight yit half so wo
As that hir semed for to be,
Nor so fulfilled of ire as she.
I trowe that no wight mighte hir plese,
Nor do that thing that mighte hir ese;
Nor she ne wolde hir sorowe slake,
Nor comfort noon unto hir take;
So depe was hir wo bigonnen,
And eek hir herte in angre ronnen,
A sorowful thing wel semed she.
Nor she hadde no-thing slowe be
For to forcracchen al hir face,
And for to rende in many place
Hir clothes, and for to tere hir swire,
As she that was fulfilled of ire;
And al to-torn lay eek hir here
Aboute hir shuldres, here and there,
As she that hadde it al to-rent
For angre and for maltalent.
And eek I telle you certeynly
How that she weep ful tenderly.
In world nis wight so hard of herte
That hadde seen hir sorowes smerte,
That nolde have had of hir pitee,
So wo-bigoon a thing was she.
She al to-dasshte hir-self for wo,
And smoot togider her handes two.
To sorwe was she ful ententyf,
That woful recchelees caityf;
Hir roughte litel of pleying,
Or of clipping or [of] kissing;
For who-so sorweful is in herte
Him liste not to pleye ne sterte,
Nor for to daunsen, ne to singe,
Ne may his herte in temper bringe
To make Ioye on even or morowe;
For Ioye is contraire unto sorowe.

Elde was peynted after this,
That shorter was a foot, ywis,
Than she was wont in her yonghede.
Unnethe hir-self she mighte fede;
So feble and eek so old was she
That faded was al hir beautee.
Ful salowe was wáxen hir colour,
Hir heed for-hoor was, whyt as flour.
Y-wis, gret qualm ne were it noon,
Ne sinne, although hir lyf were gon.
Al woxen was hir body unwelde,
And dryе, and dwyned al for elde.
A foul forwelked thing was she
That whylom round and softe had be.
Hir eres shoken fast withalle,
As from her heed they wolde falle.
Hir face frounced and forpyned,
And bothe hir hondes lorn, fordwyned.
So old she was that she ne wente
A foot, but it were by potente.

The Tyme, that passeth night and day,
And restelees travayleth ay,
And steleth from us so prively,
That to us seemeth sikerly
That it in oon point dwelleth ever,
And certes, it ne resteth never,
But goth so faste, and passeth ay,
That ther nis man that thinke may
What tyme that now present is:
Asketh at these clerkes this;
For [er] men thinke it redily,
Three tymes been y-passed by.
The tyme, that may not soiourne,
But goth, and never may retourne,
As water that doun renneth ay,
But never drope retourne may;
Ther may no-thing as tyme endure,
Metal, nor erthely creature;
For alle thing it fret and shal:
The tyme eek, that chaungeth al,
And al doth waxe and fostred be,
And alle thing distroyeth he:
The tyme, that eldeth our auncessours
And eldeth kinges and emperours,
And that us alle shal overcomen
Er that deeth us shal have nomen:

The tyme, that hath al in welde
To elden folk, had maad hir elde
So inly, that, to my witing,
She mighte helpe hir-self no-thing,
But turned ageyn unto childhede;
She had no-thing hir-self to lede,
Ne wit ne pith in[with] hir holde
More than a child of two yeer olde.
But natheles, I trowe that she
Was fair sumtyme, and fresh to see,
Whan she was in hir rightful age:
But she was past al that passage
And was a doted thing bicomen.
A furred cope on had she nomen;
Wel had she clad hir-self and warm,
For cold mighte elles doon hir harm.
These olde folk have alwey colde,
Hir kinde is swiche, whan they ben olde.
Another thing was doon ther write,
That semede lyk an ipocrite,
And it was cleped POPE-HOLY.
That ilke is she that prively
Ne spareth never a wikked dede,
Whan men of hir taken non hede;
And maketh hir outward precious,
With pale visage and pitous,
And semeth a simple creature;
But ther nis no misaventure
That she ne thenketh in hir corage.
Ful lyk to hir was that image,
That maked was lyk hir semblaunce.
She was ful simple of countenaunce,
And she was clothed and eek shod,
As she were, for the love of god,
Yolden to religioun,
Swich semed hir devocioun.
A sauter held she faste in honde,
And bisily she gan to fonde
To make many a feynt prayere
To god, and to his seyntes dere.
Ne she was gay, fresh, ne Iolyf,
But semed be ful ententyf
To gode werkes, and to faire,
And therto she had on an haire.
Ne certes, she was fat no-thing,
But semed wery for fasting;
Of colour pale and deed was she.
From hir the gate [shal] werned be
Of paradys, that blisful place;
For swich folk maketh lene hir face,
As Crist seith in his evangyle,
To gete hem prys in toun a whyle;
And for a litel glorie veine
They lesen god and eek his reine.
And alderlast of everichoon,
Was peynted POVERT al aloon,
That not a peny hadde in wolde,
Al-though [that] she hir clothes solde,
And though she shulde anhonged be;
For naked as a worm was she.
And if the weder stormy were,
For colde she shulde have deyed there.
She nadde on but a streit old sak,
And many a clout on it ther stak;
This was hir cote and hir mantel,
No more was there, never a del,
To clothe her with; I undertake,
Gret leyser hadde she to quake.
And she was put, that I of talke,
Fer fro these other, up in an halke;
There lurked and there coured she,
For povre thing, wher-so it be,
Is shamfast, and despysed ay.
Acursed may wel be that day,
That povre man conceyved is;
For god wot, al to selde, y-wis,
Is any povre man wel fed,
Or wel arayed or y-cled,
Or wel biloved, in swich wyse
In honour that he may aryse.
Alle these thinges, wel avysed,
As I have you er this devysed,
With gold and asure over alle
Depeynted were upon the walle.
Squar was the wal, and high somdel;
Enclosed, and y-barred wel,
In stede of hegge, was that gardin;
Com never shepherde therin.
Into that gardyn, wel [y-]wrought,
Who-so that me coude have brought,
By laddre, or elles by degree,
It wolde wel have lyked me.
For swich solace, swich Ioye, and play,
I trowe that never man ne say,
As in that place delitous.
The gardin was not daungerous
To herberwe briddes many oon.
So riche a yerd was never noon
Of briddes songe, and braunches grene.
Therin were briddes mo, I wene,
Than been in alle the rewme of Fraunce.
Ful blisful was the accordaunce
Of swete and pitous songe they made,
For al this world it oughte glade.
And I my-self so mery ferde,
Whan I hir blisful songes herde,

Tl.at for an hundred pound nolde I, —
If that the passage openly
Hadde been unto me free —
That I nolde entren for to see
Thassemblee, god [it kepe and were!] —
Of briddes, whiche therinne were,
That songen, through hir mery throtes,
Daunces of love, and mery notes.
Whan I thus herde foules singe,
I fel faste in a weymentinge,
By which art, or by what engyn
I mighte come in that gardyn;
But way I couthe finde noon
Into that gardin for to goon.
Ne nought wiste I if that ther were
Eyther hole or place [o]-where,
By which I mighte have entree;
Ne ther was noon to teche me;
For I was al aloon, y-wis,
Ful wo and anguissous of this.
Til atte laste bithoughte I me,
That by no weye ne mighte it be;
That ther nas laddre or wey to passe,
Or hole, into so fair a place.
Tho gan I go a ful gret pas
Envyroning even in compas
The closing of the square wal,
Til that I fond a wiket smal
So shet, that I ne mighte in goon,
And other entree was ther noon.
Upon this dore I gan to smyte,
That was [so] fetys and so lyte;
For other wey coude I not seke.
Ful long I shoof, and knokked eke,
And stood ful long and of[t] herkning
If that I herde a wight coming;
Til that the dore of thilke entree
A mayden curteys opened me.
Hir beer was as yelowe of hewe
As any basin scoured newe.
Hir flesh [as] tendre as is a chike,
With bente browes, smothe and slike;
And by mesure large were
The opening of hir yën clere.
Hir nose of good proporcioun,
Hir yën greye as a faucoun,
With swete breeth and wel savoured.
Hir face whyt and wel coloured,
With litel mouth, and round to see;
A clove chin eek hadde she.
Hir nekke was of good fasoun
In lengthe and gretnesse, by resoun,
Withoute bleyne, scabbe, or royne.
Fro Ierusalem unto Burgoyne
Ther nis a fairer nekke, y-wis,
To fele how smothe and softe it is.
Hir throte, al-so whyt of hewe
As snow on braunche snowed newe.
Of body ful wel wrought was she
Men neded not, in no cuntree,
A fairer body for to seke.
And of fyn orfrays had she eke
A chapelet: so semly noon
Ne wered never mayde upon; . . .
And faire above that chapelet
A rose gerland had she set.
She hadde [in honde] a gay mirour,
And with a riche gold tressour
Hir heed was tressed queyntely;
Hir sleves sewed fetisly.
And for to kepe hir hondes faire
Of gloves whyte she hadde a paire.
And she hadde on a cote of grene
Of cloth of Gaunt; withouten wene,
Wel semed by hir apparayle
She was not wont to greet travayle.
For whan she kempt was fetisly,
And wel arayed and richely,
Thanne had she doon al hir Iournee;
For mery and wel bigoon was she.
She ladde a lusty lyf in May,
She hadde no thought, by night ne day,
Of no-thing, but it were oonly
To graythe hir wel and uncouthly.
Whan that this dore hadde opened me
This mayden, semely for to see,
I thanked hir as I best mighte,
And axede hir how that she highte,
And what she was, I axede eke.
And she to me was nought unmeke,
Ne of hir answer daungerous,
But faire answerde, and seide thus: —
'Lo, sir, my name is YDELNESSE;
So clepe men me, more and lesse.
Ful mighty and ful riche am I,
And that of oon thing, namely;
For I entende to no-thing
But to my Ioye, and my pleying,
And for to kembe and tresse me.
Aqueynted am I, and privee
With Mirthe, lord of this gardyn,
That fro the lande of Alexandryn
Made the trees be hider fet,
That in this gardin been y-set.

And whan the trees were woxen on
highte,
This wal, that stant here in thy sighte,
Dide Mirthe enclosen al aboute;
And these images, al withoute,
He dide hem bothe entaile and peynte,
That neither ben Iolyf ne queynte,
But they ben ful of sorowe and wo,
As thou hast seen a whyle ago.
'And ofte tyme, him to solace,
Sir Mirthe cometh into this place,
And eek with him cometh his meynee,
That liven in lust and Iolitee.
And now is Mirthe therin, to here
The briddes, how they singen clere,
The mavis and the nightingale,
And other Ioly briddes smale.
And thus he walketh to solace
Him and his folk; for swetter place
To pleyen in he may not finde,
Although he soughte oon in-til Inde.
The alther-fairest folk to see
That in this world may founde be
Hath Mirthe with him in his route,
That folowen him alwayes aboute.'
When Ydelnesse had told al this,
And I hadde herkned wel, y-wis,
Than seide I to dame Ydelnesse,
'Now al-so wisly god me blesse,
Sith Mirthe, that is so fair and free,
Is in this yerde with his meynee,
Fro thilke assemblee, if I may,
Shal no man werne me to-day,
That I this night ne mote it see.
For, wel wene I, ther with him be
A fair and Ioly companye
Fulfilled of alle curtesye.'
And forth, withoute wordes mo,
In at the wiket wente I tho,
That Ydelnesse hadde opened me,
Into that gardin fair to see.
And whan I was [ther]in, y-wis,
Myn herte was ful glad of this.
For wel wende I ful sikerly
Have been in paradys erth[e]ly;
So fair it was, that, trusteth wel,
It semed a place espirituel
For certes, as at my devys,
Ther is no place in paradys
So good in for to dwelle or be
As in that GARDIN, thoughte me;
For there was many a brid singing,
Throughout the yerde al thringing.
In many places were nightingales,
Alpes, finches, and wodewales,
That in her swete song delyten
In thilke place as they habyten.
Ther mighte men see many flokkes
Of turtles and [of] laverokkes.
Chalaundres fele saw I there,
That wery, nigh forsongen were.
And thrustles, terins, and mavys,
That songen for to winne hem prys,
And eek to sormounte in hir song
These other briddes hem among.
By note made fair servyse
These briddes, that I you devyse;
They songe hir song as faire and wel
As angels doon espirituel.
And, trusteth wel, whan I hem herde,
Full lustily and wel I ferde;
For never yit swich melodye
Was herd of man that mighte dye.
Swich swete song was hem among,
That me thoughte it no briddes song,
But it was wonder lyk to be
Song of mermaydens of the see;
That, for her singing is so clere,
Though we mermaydens clepe hem here
In English, as in our usaunce,
Men clepen hem sereyns in Fraunce.
Ententif weren for to singe
These briddes, that nought unkunninge
Were of hir craft, and apprentys,
But of [hir] song sotyl and wys.
And certes, whan I herde hir song,
And saw the grene place among,
In herte I wex so wonder gay,
That I was never erst, er that day,
So Iolyf, nor so wel bigo,
Ne mery in herte, as I was tho.
And than wiste I, and saw ful wel,
That Ydelnesse me served wel,
That me putte in swich Iolitee.
Hir freend wel oughte I for to be,
Sith she the dore of that gardyn
Hadde opened, and me leten in.
From hennesforth how that I wroughte,
I shal you tellen, as me thoughte.
First, whereof Mirthe served there,
And eek what folk ther with him were,
Withoute fable I wol descryve.
And of that gardin eek as blyve
I wol you tellen after this.
The faire fasoun al, y-wis,
That wel [y-]wrought was for the nones,

I may not telle you al at ones:
But as I may and can, I shal
By ordre tellen you it al.
Ful fair servyse and eek ful swete
These briddes maden as they sete.
Layes of love, ful wel sowning
They songen in hir Iargoning;
Summe highe and summe eek lowe songe
Upon the braunches grene y-sponge.
The sweetnesse of hir melodye
Made al myn herte in reverdye.
And whan that I hadde herd, I trowe,
These briddes singing on a rowe,
Than mighte I not withholde me
That I ne wente in for to see
Sir Mirthe; for my desiring
Was him to seen, over alle thing,
His countenaunce and his manere:
That sighte was to me ful dere.
Tho wente I forth on my right hond
Doun by a litel path I fond
Of mentes ful, and fenel grene;
And faste by, withoute wene,
SIR MIRTHE I fond; and right anoon
Unto sir Mirthe gan I goon,
Ther-as he was, him to solace.
And with him, in that lusty place,
So fair folk and so fresh hadde he,
That whan I saw, I wondred me
Fro whennes swich folk mighte come,
So faire they weren, alle and some;
For they were lyk, as to my sighte,
To angels, that ben fethered brighte.
This folk, of which I telle you so,
Upon a carole wenten tho.
A lady caroled hem, that highte
GLADNES, [the] blisful and the lighte;
Wel coude she singe and lustily,
Non half so wel and semely,
And make in song swich refreininge,
It sat hir wonder wel to singe.
Hir vois ful cleer was and ful swete.
She was nought rude ne unmete,
But couthe y-now of swich doing
As longeth unto caroling:
For she was wont in every place
To singen first, folk to solace;
For singing most she gaf hir to;
No craft had she so leef to do.
Tho mightest thou caroles seen,
And folk [ther] daunce and mery been,
And make many a fair tourning
Upon the grene gras springing.

Ther mightest thou see these floutours,
Minstrales, and eek Iogelours,
That wel to singe dide hir peyne.
Somme songe songes of Loreyne;
For in Loreyne hir notes be
Ful swetter than in this contree.
Ther was many a timbestere,
And saylours, that I dar wel swere
Couthe hir craft ful parfitly.
The timbres up ful sotilly
They caste, and henten [hem] ful ofte
Upon a finger faire and softe,
That they [ne] fayled never-mo.
Ful fetis damiselles two,
Right yonge, and fulle of semlihede,
In kirtles, and non other wede,
And faire tressed every tresse,
Hadde Mirthe doon, for his noblesse,
Amidde the carole for to daunce;
But her-of lyth no remembraunce,
How that they daunced queyntely.
That oon wolde come al prively
Agayn that other: and whan they were
Togidre almost, they threwe y-fere
Hir mouthes so, that through hir play
It semed as they kiste alway;
To dauncen wel coude they the gyse;
What shulde I more to you devyse?
Ne bede I never thennes go,
Whyles that I saw hem daunce so.
Upon the carole wonder faste
I gan biholde; til atte laste
A lady gan me for to espye,
And she was cleped CURTESYE,
The worshipful, the debonaire;
I pray god ever falle hir faire!
Ful curteisly she called me,
'What do ye there, beau sire?' quod she,
'Come [neer], and if it lyke yow
To dauncen, daunceth with us now.'
And I, withoute tarying,
Wente into the caroling.
I was abasshed never a del,
But it me lykede right wel
That Curtesye me cleped so,
And bad me on the daunce go.
For if I hadde durst, certeyn
I wolde have caroled right fayn,
As man that was to daunce blythe.
Than gan I loken ofte sythe
The shap, the bodies, and the cheres,
The countenaunce and the maneres

Of alle the folk that daunced there,
And I shal telle what they were.
Ful fair was Mirthe, ful long and high;
A fairer man I never sigh.
As round as appel was his face,
Ful rody and whyt in every place.
Fetys he was and wel beseye,
With metely mouth and yĕn greye;
His nose by mesure wrought ful right;
Crisp was his heer, and eek ful bright.
His shuldres of a large brede,
And smalish in the girdilstede.
He semed lyk a portreiture,
So noble he was of his stature,
So fair, so Ioly, and so fetys,
With limes wrought at poynt devys,
Deliver, smert, and of gret might;
Ne sawe thou never man so light.
Of berde unnethe hadde he no-thing,
For it was in the firste spring.
Ful yong he was, and mery of thought,
And in samyt, with briddes wrought,
And with gold beten fetisly,
His body was clad ful richely.
Wrought was his robe in straunge gyse,
And al to-slitered for queyntyse
In many a place, lowe and hye.
And shod he was with greet maistrye,
With shoon decoped, and with laas.
By druerye, and by solas,
His leef a rosen chapelet
Had maad, and on his heed it set.
And wite ye who was his leef?
Dame GLADNES ther was him so leef,
That singeth so wel with glad corage,
That from she was twelve yeer of age,
She of hir love graunt him made.
Sir Mirthe hir by the finger hadde
[In] daunsing, and she him also;
Gret love was atwixe hem two.
Bothe were they faire and brighte of hewe;
She semede lyk a rose newe
Of colour, and hir flesh so tendre,
That with a brere smale and slendre
Men mighte it cleve, I dar wel sayn.
Hir forheed, frounceles al playn.
Bente were hir browes two,
Hir yĕn greye, and gladde also,
That laughede ay in hir semblaunt,
First or the mouth, by covenaunt.
I not what of hir nose descryve;
So fair hath no womman alyve. . . .
Hir heer was yelowe, and cleer shyning,
I wot no lady so lyking.
Of orfrays fresh was hir gerland;
I, whiche seen have a thousand,
Saugh never, y-wis, no gerlond yit,
So wel [y]-wrought of silk as it.
And in an over-gilt samyt
Clad she was, by gret delyt,
Of which hir leef a robe werde,
The myrier she in herte fĕrde.
And next hir wente, on hir other syde,
The god of Love, that can devyde
Love, as him lyketh it [to] be.
But he can cherles daunten, he,
And maken folkes pryde fallen.
And he can wel these lordes thrallen,
And ladies putte at lowe degree,
Whan he may hem to proude see.
This God of Love of his fasoun
Was lyk no knave, ne quistroun;
His beautee gretly was to pryse.
But of his robe to devyse
I drede encombred for to be.
For nought y-clad in silk was he,
But al in floures and flourettes,
Y-painted al with amorettes;
And with losenges and scochouns,
With briddes, libardes, and lyouns,
And other beestes wrought ful wel.
His garnement was everydel
Y-portreyed and y-wrought with floures,
By dyvers medling of coloures.
Floures ther were of many gyse
Y-set by compas in assyse;
Ther lakked no flour, to my dome,
Ne nought so muche as flour of brome,
Ne violete, ne eek pervenke,
Ne flour non, that man can on thenke,
And many a rose-leef ful long
Was entermedled ther-among:
And also on his heed was set
Of roses rede a chapelet.
But nightingales, a ful gret route,
That flyen over his heed aboute,
The leves felden as they flyen;
And he was al with briddes wryen,
With popiniay, with nightingale,
With chalaundre, and with wodewale,
With finch, with lark, and with archaungel.
He semede as he were an aungel
That doun were comen fro hevene clere
Love hadde with him a bachelere,
That he made alweyes with him be;

SWETE-LOKING cleped was he.
This bachelere stood biholding
The daunce, and in his honde holding
Turke bowes two hadde he.
That oon of hem was of a tree
That bereth a fruyt of savour wikke;
Ful croked was that foule stikke,
And knotty here and there also,
And blak as bery, or any slo.
That other bowe was of a plante
Withoute wem, I dar warante,
Ful even, and by proporcioun
Tretys and long, of good fasoun.
And it was peynted wel and thwiten,
And over-al diapred and writen
With ladies and with bacheleres,
Ful lightsom and [ful] glad of cheres.
These bowes two held Swete-Loking,
That semed lyk no gadeling.
And ten brode arowes held he there,
Of which five in his right hond were.
But they were shaven wel and dight,
Nokked and fethered a-right;
And al they were with gold bigoon,
And strong poynted everichoon,
And sharpe for to kerven weel.
But iren was ther noon ne steel;
For al was gold, men mighte it see,
Out-take the fetheres and the tree.
The swiftest of these arowes fyve
Out of a bowe for to dryve,
And best [y]-fethered for to flee,
And fairest eek, was cleped BEAUTEE.
That other arowe, that hurteth lesse,
Was cleped, as I trowe, SIMPLESSE.
The thridde cleped was FRAUNCHYSE,
That fethered was, in noble wyse,
With valour and with curtesye.
The fourthe was cleped COMPANYE,
That hevy for to sheten is;
But who-so sheteth right, y-wis,
May therwith doon gret harm and wo.
The fifte of these, and laste also,
FAIR-SEMBLAUNT men that arowe calle
The leeste grevous of hem alle;
Yit can it make a ful gret wounde,
But he may hope his sores sounde,
That hurt is with that arowe, y-wis;
His wo the bet bistowed is.
For he may soner have gladnesse,
His langour oughte be the lesse.
Fyve arowes were of other gyse,
That been ful foule to devyse;
For shaft and ende, sooth to telle,
Were al-so blak as feend in helle.
The first of hem is called PRYDE;
That other arowe next him bisyde,
It was [y]-cleped VILANYE;
That arowe was as with felonye
Envenimed, and with spitous blame.
The thridde of hem was cleped SHAME.
The fourthe, WANHOPE cleped is,
The fifte, the NEWE-THOUGHT, y-wis.
These arowes that I speke of here,
Were alle fyve of oon manere,
And alle were they resemblable.
To hem was wel sitting and able
The foule croked bowe hidous,
That knotty was, and al roynous.
That bowe semede wel to shete
These arowes fyve, that been unmete,
Contrarie to that other fyve.
But though I telle not as blyve
Of hir power, ne of hir might,
Her-after shal I tellen right
The sothe, and eek signifiaunce,
As fer as I have remembraunce:
Al shal be seid, I undertake,
Er of this boke an ende I make.
Now come I to my tale ageyn.
But alderfirst, I wol you seyn
The fasoun and the countenaunces
Of al the folk that on the daunce is.
The God of Love, Iolyf and light,
Ladde on his honde a lady bright,
Of high prys, and of greet degree.
This lady called was BEAUTEE,
[As was] an arowe, of which I tolde.
Ful wel [y]-thewed was she holde;
Ne she was derk ne broun, but bright,
And cleer as [is] the mone-light,
Ageyn whom alle the sterres semen
But smale candels, as we demen.
Hir flesh was tendre as dewe of flour,
Hir chere was simple as byrde in bour;
As whyt as lilie or rose in rys
Hir face, gentil and tretys.
Fetys she was, and smal to see;
No windred browes hadde she,
Ne popped hir, for it neded nought
To windre hir, or to peynte hir ought.
Hir tresses yelowe and longe straughten,
Unto hir heles doun they raughten:
Hir nose, hir mouth, and eye and cheke
Wel wrought, and al the remenaunt eke.
A ful gret savour and a swote

UNIV SCHOOL

Me thinketh in myn herte rote,
As helpe me god, whan I remembre
Of the fasoun of every membre!
In world is noon so fair a wight;
For yong she was, and hewed bright,
[Wys], plesaunt, and fetys withalle,
Gente, and in hir middel smalle.
Bisyde Beaute yede RICHESSE,
An high lady of greet noblesse,
And greet of prys in every place.
But who-so durste to hir trespace,
Or til hir folk, in worde or dede,
He were ful hardy, out of drede;
For bothe she helpe and hindre may:
And that is nought of yisterday
That riche folk have ful gret might
To helpe, and eek to greve a wight.
The beste and grettest of valour
Diden Richesse ful gret honour,
And besy weren hir to serve;
For that they wolde hir love deserve,
They cleped hir 'Lady,' grete and smalle;
This wyde world hir dredeth alle;
This world is al in hir daungere.
Hir court hath many a losengere,
And many a traytour envious,
That been ful besy and curious
For to dispreisen, and to blame
That best deserven love and name.
Bifore the folk, hem to bigylen,
These losengeres hem preyse, and smylen,
And thus the world with word anoynten;
But afterward they [prikke] and poynten
The folk right to the bare boon,
Bihinde her bak whan they ben goon,
And foule abate the folkes prys.
Ful many a worthy man and wys,
An hundred, have [they] don to dye,
These losengeres, through flaterye;
And maketh folk ful straunge be,
Ther-as hem oughte be prive.
Wel yvel mote they thryve and thee,
And yvel aryved mote they be,
These losengeres, ful of envye!
No good man loveth hir companye.
Richesse a robe of purpre on hadde,
Ne trowe not that I lye or madde;
For in this world is noon it liche,
Ne by a thousand deel so riche,
Ne noon so fair; for it ful wel
With orfrays leyd was everydel,
And portrayed in the ribaninges
Of dukes stories, and of kinges.
And with a bend of gold tasseled,
And knoppes fyne of gold ameled.
Aboute hir nekke of gentil entaile
Was shet the riche chevesaile,
In which ther was ful gret plentee
Of stones clere and bright to see.
Rychesse a girdel hadde upon,
The bokel of it was of a stoon
Of vertu greet, and mochel of might;
For who-so bar the stoon so bright,
Of venim [thurte] him no-thing doute,
While he the stoon hadde him aboute.
That stoon was greetly for to love,
And til a riche mannes bihove
Worth al the gold in Rome and Fryse.
The mourdant, wrought in noble wyse,
Was of a stoon ful precious,
That was so fyn and vertuous,
That hool a man it coude make
Of palasye, and of tooth-ake.
And yit the stoon hadde suche a grace,
That he was siker in every place,
Al thilke day, not blind to been,
That fasting mighte that stoon seen.
The barres were of gold ful fyne,
Upon a tissu of satyne,
Ful hevy, greet, and no-thing light,
In everich was a besaunt-wight.
Upon the tresses of Richesse
Was set a cercle, for noblesse,
Of brend gold, that ful lighte shoon;
So fair, trowe I, was never noon.
But he were cunning, for the nones,
That coude devysen alle the stones
That in that cercle shewen clere;
It is a wonder thing to here.
For no man coude preyse or gesse
Of hem the valewe or richesse.
Rubyes there were, saphyres, iagounces,
And emeraudes, more than two ounces.
But al bifore, ful sotilly,
A fyn carboucle set saugh I.
The stoon so cleer was and so bright,
That, al-so sone as it was night,
Men mighte seen to go, for nede,
A myle or two, in lengthe and brede.
Swich light [tho] sprang out of the stoon,
That Richesse wonder brighte shoon,
Bothe hir heed, and al hir face,
And eke aboute hir al the place.
Dame Richesse on hir hond gan lede
A yong man ful of semelihede,

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That she best loved of any thing;
His lust was muche in housholding.
In clothing was he ful fetys,
And lovede wel have hors of prys.
He wende to have reproved be
Of thefte or mordre, if that he
Hadde in his stable an hakeney.
And therfore he desyred ay
To been aqueynted with Richesse;
For al his purpos, as I gesse,
Was for to make greet dispense,
Withoute werning or defence.
And Richesse mighte it well sustene,
And hir dispenses wel mayntene,
And him alwey swich plentee sende
Of gold and silver for to spende
Withoute lakking or daungere,
As it were poured in a garnere.
And after on the daunce wente
Largesse, that sette al hir entente
For to be honourable and free;
Of Alexandres kin was she;
Hir moste Ioye was, y-wis,
Whan that she yaf, and seide 'have this.'
Not Avarice, the foule caytyf,
Was half to grype so ententyf,
As Largesse is to yeve and spende.
And god y-nough alwey hir sende,
So that the more she yaf awey,
The more, y-wis, she hadde alwey.
Gret loos hath Largesse, and gret prys;
For bothe wys folk and unwys
Were hoolly to hir baundon brought,
So wel with yiftes hath she wrought.
And if she hadde an enemy,
I trowe, that she coude craftily
Make him ful sone hir freend to be,
So large of yift and free was she;
Therfore she stood in love and grace
Of riche and povre in every place.
A ful gret fool is he, y-wis,
That bothe riche and nigard is.
A lord may have no maner vice
That greveth more than avarice.
For nigard never with strengthe of hond
May winne him greet lordship or lond.
For freendes al to fewe hath he
To doon his wil perfourmed be.
And who-so wol have freendes here,
He may not holde his tresour dere.
For by ensample I telle this,
Right as an adamaunt, y-wis,
Can drawen to him sotilly
The yren, that is leyd therby,
So draweth folkes hertes, y-wis,
Silver and gold that yeven is.
Largesse hadde on a robe fresshe
Of riche purpur Sarsinesshe.
Wel fourmed was hir face and clere,
And opened had she hir colere;
For she right there hadde in present
Unto a lady maad present
Of a gold broche, ful wel wrought.
And certes, it missat hir nought;
For through hir smokke, wrought with silk,
The flesh was seen, as whyt as milk.
Largesse, that worthy was and wys,
Held by the honde a knight of prys,
Was sib to Arthour of Bretaigne.
And that was he that bar the enseigne
Of worship, and the gonfanoun.
And yit he is of swich renoun,
That men of him seye faire thinges
Bifore barouns, erles, and kinges.
This knight was comen al newely
Fro tourneyinge faste by;
Ther hadde he doon gret chivalrye
Through his vertu and his maistrye;
And for the love of his lemman
[Had] cast doun many a doughty man.
And next him daunced dame Fraunchyse,
Arrayed in ful noble gyse.
She was not broun ne dun of hewe,
But whyt as snowe y-fallen newe.
Hir nose was wrought at poynt devys,
For it was gentil and tretys;
With eyen gladde, and browes bente;
Hir heer doun to hir heles wente.
And she was simple as dowve on tree,
Ful debonaire of herte was she.
She durste never seyn ne do
But that [thing] that hir longed to.
And if a man were in distresse,
And for hir love in hevinesse,
Hir herte wolde have ful greet pitee,
She was so amiable and free.
For were a man for hir bistad,
She wolde ben right sore adrad
That she dide over greet outrage,
But she him holpe his harm to aswage;
Hir thoughte it elles a vilanye.
And she hadde on a sukkenye,
That not of hempen herdes was;
So fair was noon in alle Arras.
Lord, it was rideled fetysly!

Ther nas nat oo poynt, trewely,
That it nas in his right assyse.
Ful wel y-clothed was Fraunchyse;
For ther is no cloth sitteth bet
On damiselle, than doth roket.
A womman wel more fetys is
In roket than in cote, y-wis.
The whyte roket, rideled faire,
Bitokened, that ful debonaire
And swete was she that it bere.
By hir daunced a bachelere;
I can not telle you what he highte,
But fair he was, and of good highte,
Al hadde he be, I sey no more,
The lordes sone of Windesore.
And next that daunced CURTESYE,
That preised was of lowe and hye,
For neither proud ne fool was she.
She for to daunce called me,
(I pray god yeve hir right good grace!)
Whan I com first into the place.
She was not nyce, ne outrageous,
But wys and war, and vertuous,
Of faire speche, and faire answere;
Was never wight misseid of here;
She bar no rancour to no wight.
Cleer broun she was, and therto bright
Of face, of body avenaunt;
I wot no lady so plesaunt.
She were worthy for to bene
An emperesse or crouned quene.
And by hir wente a knight dauncing
That worthy was and wel speking,
And ful wel coude he doon honour.
The knight was fair and stif in stour,
And in armure a semely man,
And wel biloved of his lemman.
Fair YDELNESSE than saugh I,
That alwey was me faste by.
Of hir have I, withouten fayle,
Told yow the shap and apparayle
For (as I seide) lo, that was she
That dide me so greet bountee,
That she the gate of the gardin
Undide, and leet me passen in.
And after daunced, as I gesse,
[YOUTHE], fulfild of lustinesse,
That nas not yit twelve yeer of age,
With herte wilde, and thought volage;
Nyce she was, but she ne mente
Noon harm ne slight in hir entente,
But only lust and lolitee.
For yonge folk, wel witen ye,
Have litel thought but on hir play.
Hir lemman was bisyde alway,
In swich a gyse, that he hir kiste
At alle tymes that him liste,
That al the daunce mighte it see;
They make no force of privetee;
For who spak of hem yvel or wel,
They were ashamed never-a-del,
But men mighte seen hem kisse there,
As it two yonge douves were.
For yonge was thilke bachelere,
Of beaute wot I noon his pere;
And he was right of swich an age
As Youthe his leef, and swich corage.
The lusty folk thus daunced there,
And also other that with hem were,
That weren alle of hir meynee;
Ful hende folk, and wys, and free,
And folk of fair port, trewely,
Ther weren alle comunly.
Whan I hadde seen the countenaunces
Of hem that ladden thus these daunces,
Than hadde I wil to goon and see
The gardin that so lyked me,
And loken on these faire loreres,
On pyn-trees, cedres, and oliveres.
The daunces than y-ended were;
For many of hem that daunced there
Were with hir loves went awey
Under the trees to have hir pley.
A, lord! they lived lustily!
A gret fool were he, sikerly,
That nolde, his thankes, swich lyf lede!
For this dar I seyn, out of drede,
That who-so mighte so wel fare,
For better lyf [thurte] him not care;
For ther nis so good paradys
As have a love at his devys.
Out of that place wente I tho,
And in that gardin gan I go,
Pleying along ful merily.
The God of Love ful hastely
Unto him Swete-Loking clepte,
No lenger wolde he that he kepte
His bowe of golde, that shoon so bright.
He [bad] him [bende it] anon-right;
And he ful sone [it]sette on ende,
And at a braid he gan it bende,
And took him of his arowes fyve,
Ful sharpe and redy for to dryve.
Now god that sit in magestee
Fro deedly woundes kepe me,
If so be that he [wol] me shete;

For if I with his arowe mete,
It [wol me greven] sore, y-wis!
But I, that no-thing wiste of this,
Wente up and doun ful many a wey,
And he me folwed faste alwey;
But no-wher wolde I reste me,
Til I hadde al the [yerde in] be.
The gardin was, by mesuring,
Right even and squar in compassing;
It was as long as it was large.
Of fruyt hadde every tree his charge,
But it were any hidous tree
Of which ther were two or three.
Ther were, and that wot I ful wel,
Of pomgarnettes a ful gret del;
That is a fruyt ful wel to lyke,
Namely to folk whan they ben syke.
And trees ther were, greet foisoun,
That baren notes in hir sesoun,
Such as men notemigges calle,
That swote of savour been withalle.
And alemandres greet plentee,
Figes, and many a date-tree
Ther weren, if men hadde nede,
Through the gardin in length and brede.
Ther was eek wexing many a spyce,
As clow-gelofre, and licoryce,
Gingere, and greyn de paradys,
Canelle, and setewale of prys,
And many a spyce delitable,
To eten whan men ryse fro table.
And many hoomly trees ther were,
That peches, coynes, and apples bere,
Medlers, ploumes, peres, chesteynes,
Cheryse, of whiche many on fayn is,
Notes, aleys, and bolas,
That for to seen it was solas;
With many high lorer and pyn
Was renged clene al that gardyn;
With cipres, and with oliveres,
Of which that nigh no plente here is.
Ther were elmes grete and stronge,
Maples, ashe, ook, asp, planes longe,
Fyn ew, popler, and lindes faire,
And othere trees ful many a payre.
What sholde I telle you more of it?
Ther were so many treës yit,
That I sholde al encombred be
Er I had rekened every tree.
These trees were set, that I devyse,
Oon from another, in assyse,
Five fadome or sixe, I trowe so,
But they were hye and grete also:
And for to kepe out wel the sonne,
The croppes were so thikke y-ronne,
And every braunch in other knet,
And ful of grene leves set,
That sonne mighte noon descende,
Lest [it] the tendre grasses shende.
Ther mighte men does and roes y-see,
And of squirels ful greet plentee,
From bough to bough alwey leping.
Conies ther were also playing,
That comen out of hir claperes
Of sondry colours and maneres,
And maden many a turneying
Upon the fresshe gras springing.
In places saw I WELLES there,
In whiche ther no frogges were,
And faire in shadwe was every welle;
But I ne can the nombre telle
Of stremes smale, that by devys
Mirthe had don come through condys,
Of which the water, in renning,
Gan make a noyse ful lyking.
About the brinkes of thise welles,
And by the stremes over-al elles
Sprang up the gras, as thikke y-set
And softe as any veluët,
On which men mighte his lemman leye,
As on a fetherbed, to pleye,
For therthe was ful softe and swete.
Through moisture of the welle wete
Sprang up the sote grene gras,
As fair, as thikke, as mister was.
But muche amended it the place,
That therthe was of swich a grace
That it of floures had plente,
That both in somer and winter be.
Ther sprang the violete al newe,
And fresshe pervinke, riche of hewe,
And floures yelowe, whyte, and rede;
Swich plentee grew ther never in mede.
Ful gay was al the ground, and queynt,
And poudred, as men had it peynt,
With many a fresh and sondry flour,
That casten up ful good savour.
I wol not longe holde you in fable
Of al this gardin delitable.
I moot my tonge stinten nede,
For I ne may, withouten drede,
Naught tellen you the beautee al,
Ne half the bountee therewithal.
I wente on right honde and on left
Aboute the place; it was not left,
Til I hadde al the [yerde in] been,

In the estres that men mighte seen.
And thus whyle I wente in my pley,
The God of Love me folowed ay,
Right as an hunter can abyde
The beste, til he seeth his tyde
To shete, at good mes, to the dere,
Whan that him nedeth go no nere.
And so befil, I rested me
Besyde a welle, under a tree,
Which tree in Fraunce men calle a pyn.
But, sith the tyme of king Pepyn,
Ne grew ther tree in mannes sighte
So fair, ne so wel woxe in highte;
In al that yerde so high was noon.
And springing in a marble-stoon
Had nature set, the sothe to telle,
Under that pyn-tree a welle.
And on the border, al withoute,
Was writen, in the stone aboute,
Lettres smale, that seyden thus,
'Here starf the faire Narcisus.'
Narcisus was a bachelere,
That Love had caught in his daungere,
And in his net gan him so streyne,
And dide him so to wepe and pleyne,
That nede him muste his lyf forgo.
For a fair lady, hight Echo,
Him loved over any creature,
And gan for him swich peyne endure,
That on a tyme she him tolde,
That, if he hir loven nolde,
That hir behoved nedes dye,
Ther lay non other remedye.
But natheles, for his beautee,
So fiers and daungerous was he,
That he nolde graunten hir asking,
For weping, ne for fair praying.
And whan she herde him werne hir so,
She hadde in herte so gret wo,
And took it in so gret dispyt,
That she, withoute more respyt,
Was deed anoon. But, er she deyde,
Ful pitously to god she preyde,
That proude-herted Narcisus,
That was in love so daungerous,
Mighte on a day ben hampred so
For love, and been so hoot for wo,
That never he mighte loye atteyne;
Than shulde he fele in every veyne
What sorowe trewe lovers maken,
That been so vilaynsly forsaken.
This prayer was but resonable,
Therfor god held it ferme and stable:
For Narcisus, shortly to telle,
By aventure com to that welle
To reste him in that shadowing
A day, whan he com fro hunting.
This Narcisus had suffred paynes
For renning alday in the playnes,
And was for thurst in greet distresse
Of hete, and of his werinesse
That hadde his breeth almost binomen.
Whan he was to that welle y-comen,
That shadwed was with braunches grene,
He thoughte of thilke water shene
To drinke and fresshe him wel withalle;
And doun on knees he gan to falle,
And forth his heed and nekke out-straughte
To drinken of that welle a draughte.
And in the water anoon was sene
His nose, his mouth, his yën shene,
And he ther-of was al abasshed;
His owne shadowe had him bitrasshed.
For wel wende he the forme see
Of a child of greet beautee.
Wel couthe Love him wreke tho
Of daunger and of pryde also,
That Narcisus somtyme him bere.
He quitte him wel his guerdon there;
For he so musede in the welle,
That, shortly al the sothe to telle,
He lovede his owne shadowe so,
That atte laste he starf for wo.
For whan he saugh that he his wille
Mighte in no maner wey fulfille,
And that he was so faste caught
That he him couthe comfort naught,
He loste his wit right in that place,
And deyde within a litel space.
And thus his warisoun he took
For the lady that he forsook.
Ladyes, I preye ensample taketh,
Ye that ayeins your love mistaketh:
For if hir deeth be yow to wyte,
God can ful wel your whyle quyte.
Whan that this lettre, of whiche I telle,
Had taught me that it was the welle
Of Narcisus in his beautee,
I gan anoon withdrawe me,
Whan it fel in my remembraunce,
That him bitidde swich mischaunce.
But at the laste than thoughte I,

That scatheles, ful sikerly,
I mighte unto THE WELLE go.
Whereof shulde I abasshen so?
Unto the welle than wente I me,
And doun I louted for to see
The clere water in the stoon,
And eek the gravel, which that shoon
Down in the botme, as silver fyn;
For of the welle, this is the fyn,
In world is noon so cleer of hewe.
The water is ever fresh and newe
That welmeth up with wawes brighte
The mountance of two finger highte.
Abouten it is gras springing,
For moiste so thikke and wel lyking,
That it ne may in winter dye,
No more than may the see be drye.
Down at the botme set saw I
Two cristal stones craftely
In thilke fresshe and faire welle.
But o thing soothly dar I telle,
That ye wol holde a greet mervayle
Whan it is told, withouten fayle.
For whan the sonne, cleer in sighte,
Cast in that welle his bemes brighte,
And that the heet descended is,
Than taketh the cristal stoon, y-wis,
Agayn the sonne an hundred hewes,
Blewe, yelowe, and rede, that fresh and newe is.
Yit hath the merveilous cristal
Swich strengthe, that the place overal,
Bothe fowl and tree, and leves grene,
And al the yerd in it is sene.
And for to doon you understonde,
To make ensample wol I fonde;
Right as a mirour openly
Sheweth al thing that stant therby,
As wel the colour as the figure,
Withouten any coverture;
Right so the cristal stoon, shyning,
Withouten any disceyving,
The estres of the yerde accuseth
To him that in the water museth;
For ever, in which half that he be,
He may wel half the gardin see;
And if he turne, he may right wel
Seen the remenaunt every del.
For ther is noon so litel thing
So hid, ne closed with shitting,
That it ne is sene, as though it were
Peynted in the cristal there.
This is the mirour perilous,
In which the proude Narcisus
Saw al his face fair and bright,
That made him sith to lye upright.
For who-so loke in that mirour,
Ther may no-thing ben his socour
That he ne shal ther seen som thing
That shal him lede into [loving].
Full many a worthy man hath it
Y-blent; for folk of grettest wit
Ben sone caught here and awayted;
Withouten respyt been they bayted.
Heer comth to folk of-newe rage,
Heer chaungeth many wight corage;
Heer lyth no reed ne wit therto;
For Venus sone, daun Cupido,
Hath sowen there of love the seed,
That help me lyth ther noon, ne reed,
So cercleth it the welle aboute.
His ginnes hath he set withoute
Right for to cacche in his panteres
These damoysels and bacheleres.
Love wil noon other bridde cacche,
Though he sette either net or lacche.
And for the seed that heer was sowen,
This welle is cleped, as wel is knowen,
The Welle of Love, of verray right,
Of which ther hath ful many a wight
Spoke in bokes dyversely.
But they shulle never so verily
Descripcioun of the welle here,
Ne eek the sothe of this matere,
As ye shulle, whan I have undo
The craft that hir bilongeth to.
Alway me lyked for to dwelle,
To seen the cristal in the welle,
That shewed me ful openly
A thousand thinges faste by.
But I may saye, in sory houre
Stood I to loken or to poure;
For sithen [have] I sore syked,
That mirour hath me now entryked.
But hadde I first knowen in my wit
The vertue and [the] strengthe of it,
I nolde not have mused there;
Me hadde bet ben elles-where;
For in the snare I fel anoon,
That hath bitraisshed many oon.
In thilke mirour saw I tho,
Among a thousand thinges mo,
A ROSER charged ful of roses,
That with an hegge aboute enclos is.
Tho had I swich lust and envye,
That, for Parys ne for Pavye,

Nolde I have left to goon and see
Ther grettest hepe of roses be.
Whan I was with this rage hent,
That caught hath many a man and shent,
Toward the roser gan I go.
And whan I was not fer therfro,
The savour of the roses swote
Me smoot right to the herte rote,
As I hadde al embawmed [be.]
And if I ne hadde endouted me
To have ben hated or assailed,
My thankes, wolde I not have failed
To pulle a rose of al that route
To beren in myn honde aboute,
And smellen to it wher I wente;
But ever I dredde me to repente,
And lest it greved or for-thoughte
The lord that thilke gardyn wroughte.
Of roses were ther gret woon,
So faire wexe never in roon.
Of knoppes clos, some saw I there,
And some wel beter woxen were;
And some ther been of other moysoun,
That drowe nigh to hir sesoun,
And spedde hem faste for to sprede;
I love wel swiche roses rede;
For brode roses, and open also,
Ben passed in a day or two;
But knoppes wilen fresshe be
Two dayes atte leest, or three.
The knoppes gretly lyked me,
For fairer may ther no man see.
Who-so mighte haven oon of alle,
It oughte him been ful leef withalle.
Mighte I [a] gerlond of hem geten,
For no richesse I wolde it leten.
Among THE KNOPPES I chees oon
So fair, that of the remenaunt noon
Ne preyse I half so wel as it,
Whan I avyse it in my wit.
For it so wel was enlumyned
With colour reed, as wel [y]-fyned
As nature couthe it make faire.
And it had leves wel foure paire,
That Kinde had set through his knowing
Aboute the rede rose springing.
The stalke was as risshe right,
And theron stood the knoppe upright,
That it ne bowed upon no syde.
The swote smelle sprong so wyde
That it dide al the place aboute—

FRAGMENT B.

Whan I had smelled the savour swote,
No wille hadde I fro thens yit go,
But somdel neer it wente I tho,
To take it; but myn hond, for drede,
Ne dorste I to the rose bede,
For thistels sharpe, of many maneres,
Netles, thornes, and hoked breres;
[Ful] muche they distourbled me,
For sore I dradde to harmed be.
The God of Love, with bowe bent,
That al day set hadde his talent
To pursuen and to spyen me,
Was stonding by a fige-tree.
And whan he sawe how that I
Had chosen so ententifly
The botoun, more unto my pay
Than any other that I say,
He took an arowe ful sharply whet,
And in his bowe whan it was set,
He streight up to his ere drough
The stronge bowe, that was so tough,
And shet at me so wonder smerte,
That through myn eye unto myn herte
The takel smoot, and depe it wente,
And ther-with-al such cold me hente,
That, under clothes warme and softe,
Sith that day I have chevered ofte.
Whan I was hurt thus in [that] stounde,
I fel doun plat unto the grounde.
Myn herte failed and feynted ay,
And long tyme [ther] a-swone I lay.
But whan I com out of swoning,
And hadde wit, and my feling,
I was al maat, and wende ful wel
Of blood have loren a full gret del.
But certes, the arowe that in me stood
Of me ne drew no drope of blood,
For-why I found my wounde al dreye.
Than took I with myn hondis tweye
The arowe, and ful fast out it plight,
And in the pulling sore I sight.
So at the last the shaft of tree
I drough out, with the fethers three.
But yet the hoked heed, y-wis,
The whiche Beautee callid is,
Gan so depe in myn herte passe,
That I it mighte nought arace;
But in myn herte stille it stood,
Al bledde I not a drope of blood.
I was bothe anguissous and trouble

For the peril that I saw double;
I niste what to seye or do,
Ne gete a leche my woundis to;
For neithir thurgh gras ne rote,
Ne hadde I help of hope ne bote.
But to the botoun ever-mo
Myn herte drew; for al my wo,
My thought was in non other thing.
For hadde it been in my keping,
It wolde have brought my lyf agayn.
For certeinly, I dar wel seyn,
The sight only, and the savour,
Alegged muche of my langour.
Than gan I for to drawe me
Toward the botoun fair to see;
And Love hadde gete him, in [a] throwe,
Another arowe into his bowe,
And for to shete gan him dresse;
The arowis name was Simplesse.
And whan that Love gan nyghe me nere,
He drow it up, withouten were,
And shet at me with al his might,
So that this arowe anon-right
Thourghout [myn] eigh, as it was founde,
Into myn herte hath maad a wounde.
Thanne I anoon dide al my crafte
For to drawen out the shafte,
And ther-with-al I sighed eft.
But in myn herte the heed was left,
Which ay encresid my desyre,
Unto the botoun drawe nere;
And ever, mo that me was wo,
The more desyr hadde I to go
Unto the roser, where that grew
The fresshe botoun so bright of hewe.
Betir me were have leten be;
But it bihoved nedes me
To don right as myn herte bad.
For ever the body must be lad
Aftir the herte; in wele and wo,
Of force togidre they must go.
But never this archer wolde fyne
To shete at me with alle his pyne,
And for to make me to him mete.
The thridde arowe he gan to shete,
Whan best his tyme he mighte espye,
The which was named Curtesye;
Into myn herte it dide avale.
A-swone I fel, bothe deed and pale;
Long tyme I lay, and stired nought,
Til I abraid out of my thought.
And faste than I avysed me
To drawen out the shafte of tree;
But ever the heed was left bihinde
For ought I couthe pulle or winde.
So sore it stikid whan I was hit,
That by no craft I might it flit;
But anguissous and ful of thought,
I felte such wo, my wounde ay wrought,
That somoned me alway to go
Toward the rose, that plesed me so;
But I ne durste in no manere,
Bicause the archer was so nere.
For evermore gladly, as I rede,
Brent child of fyr hath muche drede.
And, certis yit, for al my peyne,
Though that I sigh yit arwis reyne,
And grounde quarels sharpe of stele,
Ne for no payne that I might fele,
Yit might I not my-silf withholde
The faire roser to biholde;
For Love me yaf sich hardement
For to fulfille his comaundement.
Upon my feet I roos up than
Feble, as a forwoundid man;
And forth to gon [my] might I sette,
And for the archer nolde I lette.
Toward the roser fast I drow;
But thornes sharpe mo than y-now
Ther were, and also thistels thikke,
And breres, brimme for to prikke,
That I ne mighte gete grace
The rowe thornes for to passe,
To sene the roses fresshe of hewe.
I must abide, though it me rewe,
The hegge aboute so thikke was,
That closid the roses in compas.
But o thing lyked me right wele
I was so nygh, I mighte fele
Of the botoun the swote odour,
And also see the fresshe colour;
And that right gretly lyked me,
That I so neer it mighte see.
Sich Ioye anoon thereof hadde I,
That I forgat my malady.
To sene [it] hadde I sich delyt,
Of sorwe and angre I was al quit,
And of my woundes that I had thar;
For no-thing lyken me might mar
Than dwellen by the roser ay,
And thennes never to passe away.
But whan a whyle I had be thar,
The God of Love, which al to-shar
Myn herte with his arwis kene,
Caste him to yeve me woundis grene.
He shet at me ful hastily

An arwe named Company,
The whiche takel is ful able
To make these ladies merciable.
Than I anoon gan chaungen hewe
For grevaunce of my wounde newe,
That I agayn fel in swoning,
And sighed sore in compleyning.
Sore I compleyned that my sore
On me gan greven more and more.
I had non hope of allegeaunce;
So nigh I drow to desperaunce,
I rought of dethe ne of lyf,
Wither that love wolde me dryf.
If me a martir wolde he make,
I might his power nought forsake.
And whyl for anger thus I wook,
The God of Love an arowe took;
Ful sharp it was and [ful] pugnaunt,
And it was callid Fair-Semblaunt,
The which in no wys wol consente,
That any lover him repente
To serve his love with herte and alle,
For any peril that may bifalle.
But though this arwe was kene grounde
As any rasour that is founde,
To cutte and kerve, at the poynt,
The God of Love it hadde anoynt
With a precious oynement,
Somdel to yeve aleggement
Upon the woundes that he had
Through the body in my herte maad,
To helpe hir sores, and to cure,
And that they may the bet endure.
But yit this arwe, withoute more,
Made in myn herte a large sore,
That in ful gret peyne I abood.
But ay the oynement wente abrood;
Throughout my woundes large and wyde
It spredde aboute in every syde;
Through whos vertu and whos might
Myn herte Ioyful was and light.
I had ben deed and al to-shent
But for the precious oynement.
The shaft I drow out of the arwe,
Roking for wo right wondir narwe;
But the heed, which made me smerte,
Lefte bihinde in myn herte
With other foure, I dar wel say,
That never wol be take away;
But the oynement halp me wele.
And yit sich sorwe dide I fele,
That al-day I chaunged hewe,
Of my woundes fresshe and newe,
As men might see in my visage.
The arwis were so fulle of rage,
So variaunt of diversitee,
That men in everich mighte see
Bothe gret anoy and eek swetnesse,
And Ioye meynt with bittirnesse.
Now were they esy, now were they wood,
In hem I felte bothe harm and good;
Now sore without aleggement,
Now softening with oynement;
It softned here, and prikked there,
Thus ese and anger togider were.
The God of Love deliverly
Com lepand to me hastily,
And seide to me, in gret rape,
'Yeld thee, for thou may not escape!
May no defence availe thee here;
Therfore I rede mak no daungere.
If thou wolt yelde thee hastily,
Thou shalt [the] rather have mercy.
He is a fool in sikernesse,
That with daunger or stoutnesse
Rebellith ther that he shulde plese;
In such folye is litel ese.
Be meek, wher thou must nedis bowe;
To stryve ageyn is nought thy prowe.
Come at ones, and have y-do,
For I wol that it be so.
Than yeld thee here debonairly.'
And I answerid ful humbly,
'Gladly, sir; at your bidding,
I wol me yelde in alle thing.
To your servyse I wol me take;
For god defende that I shulde make
Ageyn your bidding resistence;
I wol not doon so gret offence;
For if I dide, it were no skile.
Ye may do with me what ye wile,
Save or spille, and also sloo;
Fro you in no wyse may I go.
My lyf, my deth, is in your honde,
I may not laste out of your bonde.
Pleyn at your list I yelde me,
Hoping in herte, that sumtyme ye
Comfort and ese shulle me sende;
Or ellis shortly, this is the ende,
Withouten helthe I moot ay dure,
But-if ye take me to your cure.
Comfort or helthe how shuld I have,
Sith ye me hurte, but ye me save?
The helthe of lovers moot be founde
Wher-as they token firste hir wounde.
And if ye list of me to make

Your prisoner, I wol it take
Of herte and wil, fully at gree.
Hoolly and pleyn I yelde me,
Withoute feyning or feyntyse,
To be governed by your empryse.
Of you I here so much prys,
I wol ben hool at your devys
For to fulfille your lyking
And repente for no-thing,
Hoping to have yit in som tyde
Mercy, of that [that] I abyde.'
And with that covenaunt yeld I me,
Anoon doun kneling upon my knee,
Profering for to kisse his feet;
But for no-thing he wolde me lete,
And seide, 'I love thee bothe and preyse,
Sen that thyn answer doth me ese,
For thou answerid so curteisly.
For now I wot wel uttirly,
That thou art gentil, by thy speche.
For though a man fer wolde seche,
He shulde not finden, in certeyn,
No sich answer of no vileyn;
For sich a word ne mighte nought
Isse out of a vilayns thought.
Thou shalt not lesen of thy speche,
For [to] thy helping wol I eche,
And eek encresen that I may.
But first I wol that thou obay
Fully, for thyn avauntage,
Anon to do me here homage.
And sithen kisse thou shalt my mouth,
Which to no vilayn was never couth
For to aproche it, ne for to touche;
For sauf of cherlis I ne vouche
That they shulle never neigh it nere.
For curteys, and of fair manere,
Wel taught, and ful of gentilnesse
He muste ben, that shal me kisse,
And also of ful high fraunchyse,
That shal atteyne to that empryse.
'And first of o thing warne I thee,
That peyne and gret adversitee
He mot endure, and eek travaile,
That shal me serve, withoute faile.
But ther-ageyns, thee to comforte,
And with thy servise to desporte,
Thou mayst ful glad and Ioyful be
So good a maister to have as me,
And lord of so high renoun.
I bere of Love the gonfanoun,
Of Curtesye the banere;
For I am of the silf manere,
Gentil, curteys, meek and free;
That who[so] ever ententif be
Me to honoure, doute, and serve,
And also that he him observe
Fro trespas and fro vilanye,
And him governe in curtesye
With wil and with entencioun;
For whan he first in my prisoun
Is caught, than muste he uttirly,
Fro thennes-forth ful bisily,
Caste him gentil for to be,
If he desyre helpe of me.'
Anoon withouten more delay,
Withouten daunger or affray,
I bicom his man anoon,
And gave him thankes many a oon,
And kneled doun with hondis Ioynt,
And made it in my port ful queynt;
The Ioye wente to myn herte rote.
Whan I had kissed his mouth so swote,
I had sich mirthe and sich lyking,
It cured me of languisshing.
He askid of me than hostages: —
'I have,' he seide, 'taken fele homages
Of oon and other, where I have been
Disceyved ofte, withouten wene.
These felouns, fulle of falsitee,
Have many sythes bigyled me,
And through falshede hir lust acheved,
Whereof I repente and am agreved.
And I hem gete in my daungere,
Hir falshed shulle they bye ful dere.
But for I love thee, I seye thee pleyn,
I wol of thee be more certeyn;
For thee so sore I wol now binde,
That thou away ne shalt not winde
For to denyen the covenaunt,
Or doon that is not avenaunt.
That thou were fals it were gret reuthe,
Sith thou semest so ful of treuthe.'
'Sire, if thee list to undirstande,
I merveile thee asking this demande.
For-why or wherfore shulde ye
Ostages or borwis aske of me,
Or any other sikirnesse,
Sith ye wote, in sothfastnesse,
That ye have me surprysed so,
And hool myn herte taken me fro,
That it wol do for me no-thing
But-if it be at your bidding?
Myn herte is yours, and myn right nought,
As it bihoveth, in dede and thought,
Redy in alle to worche your wille,

Whether so [it] turne to good or ille.
So sore it lustith you to plese,
No man therof may you disseise.
Ye have theron set sich Iustise,
That it is werreyd in many wise.
And if ye doute it nolde obeye,
Ye may therof do make a keye,
And holde it with you for ostage.'
'Now certis, this is noon outrage,'
Quoth Love, 'and fully I accord;
For of the body he is ful lord
That hath the herte in his tresor;
Outrage it were to asken more.'
Than of his aumener he drough
A litel keye, fetys y-nough,
Which was of gold polisshed clere,
And seide to me, 'With this keye here
Thyn herte to me now wol I shette;
For al my Iowellis loke and knette
I binde under this litel keye,
That no wight may carye aweye;
This keye is ful of gret poeste.'
With which anoon he touchid me
Undir the syde ful softely,
That he myn herte sodeynly
Without [al] anoy had spered,
That yit right nought it hath me dered.
Whan he had doon his wil al-out,
And I had put him out of dout,
'Sire,' I seide, 'I have right gret wille
Your lust and plesaunce to fulfille.
Loke ye my servise take at gree,
By thilke feith ye owe to me.
I seye nought for recreaundyse,
For I nought doute of your servyse.
But the servaunt traveileth in vayne,
That for to serven doth his payne
Unto that lord, which in no wyse
Can him no thank for his servyse.'
Love seide, 'Dismaye thee nought,
Sin thou for sucour hast me sought,
In thank thy servise wol I take,
And high of degree I wol thee make,
If wikkidnesse ne hindre thee;
But, as I hope, it shal nought be.
To worship no wight by aventure
May come, but-if he peyne endure.
Abyde and suffre thy distresse;
That hurtith now, it shal be lesse;
I wot my-silf what may thee save,
What medicyne thou woldist have.
And if thy trouthe to me thou kepe,
I shal unto thyn helping eke,
To cure thy woundes and make hem clene,
Wher-so they be olde or grene;
Thou shalt be holpen, at wordis fewe.
For certeynly thou shalt wel shewe
Wher that thou servest with good wille,
For to complisshen and fulfille
My comaundementis, day and night,
Whiche I to lovers yeve of right.'
'Ah, sire, for goddis love,' seide I,
'Er ye passe hens, ententifly
Your comaundementis to me ye say,
And I shal kepe hem, if I may;
For hem to kepen is al my thought.
And if so be I wot hem nought,
Than may I [sinne] unwitingly.
Wherfore I pray you enterely,
With al myn herte, me to lere,
That I trespasse in no manere.'
The god of love than chargid me
Anoon, as ye shal here and see,
Word by word, by right empryse,
So as the Romance shal devyse.
The maister lesith his tyme to lere,
Whan the disciple wol not here
It is but veyn on him to swinke,
That on his lerning wol not thinke.
Who-so lust love, let him entende,
For now the Romance ginneth amende.
Now is good to here, in fay,
If any be that can it say,
And poynte it as the resoun is
Set; for other-gate, y-wis,
It shal nought wel in alle thing
Be brought to good undirstonding:
For a reder that poyntith ille
A good sentence may ofte spille.
The book is good at the ending,
Maad of newe and lusty thing;
For who-so wol the ending here,
The crafte of love he shal now lere,
If that he wol so long abyde,
Til I this Romance may unhyde,
And undo the signifiaunce
Of this dreme into Romaunce.
The sothfastnesse that now is hid,
Without coverture shal be kid,
Whan I undon have this dreming,
Wherin no word is of lesing.
'Vilany, at the biginning,
I wol,' sayd Love, 'over alle thing,
Thou leve, if thou wolt [not] be
Fals, and trespasse ageynes me.

I curse and blame generally
Alle hem that loven vilany;
For vilany makith vilayn,
And by his dedis a cherle is seyn.
Thise vilayns arn without pitee,
Frendshipe, love, and al bounte.
I nil receyve to my servyse
Hem that ben vilayns of empryse.
'But undirstonde in thyn entent,
That this is not myn entendement,
To clepe no wight in no ages
Only gentil for his linages.
But who-so [that] is vertuous,
And in his port nought outrageous,
Whan sich oon thou seest thee biforn,
Though he be not gentil born,
Thou mayst wel seyn, this is a soth,
That he is gentil, bicause he doth
As longeth to a gentilman;
Of hem non other deme I can.
For certeynly, withouten drede,
A cherl is demed by his dede,
Of hye or lowe, as ye may see,
Or of what kinrede that he be.
Ne say nought, for noon yvel wille,
Thing that is to holden stille;
It is no worship to misseye.
Thou mayst ensample take of Keye,
That was somtyme, for misseying,
Hated bothe of old and ying;
As fer as Gaweyn, the worthy,
Was preysed for his curtesy,
Keye was hated, for he was fel,
Of word dispitous and cruel.
Wherfore be wyse and aqueyntable,
Goodly of word, and resonable
Bothe to lesse and eek to mar.
And whan thou comest ther men ar,
Loke that thou have in custom ay
First to salue hem, if thou may:
And if it falle, that of hem som
Salue thee first, be not dom,
But quyte him curteisly anoon
Without abiding, er they goon.
'For no-thing eek thy tunge applye
To speke wordis of ribaudye.
To vilayn speche in no degree
Lat never thy lippe unbounden be.
For I nought holde him, in good feith,
Curteys, that foule wordis seith.
And alle wimmen serve and preyse,
And to thy power hir honour reyse.
And if that any missayere
Dispyse wimmen, that thou mayst here,
Blame him, and bidde him holde him stille.
And set thy might and al thy wille
Wimmen and ladies for to plese,
And to do thing that may hem ese,
That they ever speke good of thee,
For so thou mayst best preysed be.
'Loke fro pryde thou kepe thee wele;
For thou mayst bothe perceyve and fele,
That pryde is bothe foly and sinne;
And he that pryde hath, him withinne,
Ne may his herte, in no wyse,
Meken ne souplen to servyse.
For pryde is founde, in every part,
Contrarie unto Loves art.
And he that loveth trewely
Shoulde him contene lolily,
Withouten pryde in sondry wyse,
And him disgysen in queyntyse.
For queynt array, withouten drede,
Is no-thing proud, who takith hede;
For fresh array, as men may see,
Withouten pryde may ofte be.
'Mayntene thy-silf aftir thy rent,
Of robe and eek of garnement;
For many sythe fair clothing
A man amendith in mich thing.
And loke alwey that they be shape,
What garnement that thou shalt make,
Of him that can [hem] beste do,
With all that perteyneth therto.
Poyntis and sleves be wel sittand,
Right and streight upon the hand.
Of shoon and botes, newe and faire,
Loke at the leest thou have a paire;
And that they sitte so fetisly,
That these rude may uttirly
Merveyle, sith that they sitte so pleyn,
How they come on or of ageyn.
Were streite gloves, with aumenere
Of silk; and alwey with good chere
Thou yeve, if thou have richesse;
And if thou have nought, spend the lesse.
Alwey be mery, if thou may,
But waste not thy good alway.
Have hat of floures fresh as May,
Chapelet of roses of Whitsonday;
For sich array ne cost but lyte.
Thyn hondis wasshe, thy teeth make whyte,
And let no filthe upon thee be.

Thy nailes blak if thou mayst see,
Voide it awey deliverly,
And kembe thyn heed right Iolily.
[Fard] not thy visage in no wyse,
For that of love is not thempryse;
For love doth haten, as I finde,
A beaute that cometh not of kinde.
Alwey in herte I rede thee
Glad and mery for to be,
And be as Ioyful as thou can;
Love hath no Ioye of sorowful man.
That yvel is ful of curtesye
That [lauhwith] in his maladye;
For ever of love the siknesse
Is meynd with swete and bitternesse.
The sore of love is merveilous;
For now the lover [is] Ioyous,
Now can he pleyne, now can he grone,
Now can he singen, now maken mone.
To-day he pleyneth for hevinesse,
To-morowe he pleyeth for Iolynesse.
The lyf of love is full contrarie,
Which stoundemele can ofte varie.
But if thou canst [som] mirthis make,
That men in gree wole gladly take,
Do it goodly, I comaunde thee;
For men sholde, wher-so-ever they be,
Do thing that hem [best] sitting is,
For therof cometh good loos and pris.
Wher-of that thou be vertuous,
Ne be not straunge ne daungerous.
For if that thou good rider be,
Prike gladly, that men may se.
In armes also if thou conne,
Pursue, til thou a name hast wonne.
And if thy voice be fair and clere,
Thou shalt maken no gret daungere
Whan to singe they goodly preye;
It is thy worship for to obeye.
Also to you it longith ay
To harpe and giterne, daunce and play;
For if he can wel foote and daunce,
It may him greetly do avaunce.
Among eek, for thy lady sake,
Songes and complayntes that thou make;
For that wol meve [hem] in hir herte,
Whan they reden of thy smerte.
Loke that no man for scarce thee holde,
For that may greve thee manyfolde.
Resoun wol that a lover be
In his yiftes more large and free
Than cherles that been not of loving.
For who ther-of can any thing,
He shal be leef ay for to yeve,
In [Loves] lore who so wolde leve;
For he that, through a sodeyn sight,
Or for a kissing, anon-right
Yaf hool his herte in wille and thought,
And to him-silf kepith right nought,
Aftir [swich yift], is good resoun,
He yeve his good in abandoun.
'Now wol I shortly here reherce,
Of that [that] I have seid in verse,
Al the sentence by and by,
In wordis fewe compendiously,
That thou the bet mayst on hem thinke,
Whether-so it be thou wake or winke;
For [that] the wordis litel greve
A man to kepe, whanne it is breve.
'Who-so with Love wol goon or ryde
He mot be curteys, and void of pryde,
Mery and fulle of Iolite,
And of largesse alosed be.
'First I Ioyne thee, here in penaunce,
That ever, withoute repentaunce,
Thou set thy thought in thy loving,
To laste withoute repenting;
And thenke upon thy mirthis swete,
That shal folowe aftir whan ye mete.
'And for thou trewe to love shalt be,
I wol, and [eek] comaunde thee,
That in oo place thou sette, al hool,
Thyn herte, withouten halfen dool,
For trecherie, [in] sikernesse;
For I lovede never doublenesse.
To many his herte that wol depart,
Everiche shal have but litel part.
But of him drede I me right nought,
That in oo place settith his thought.
Therfore in oo place it sette,
And lat it never thennes flette.
For if thou yevest it in lening,
I holde it but a wrecchid thing:
Therfore yeve it hool and quyte,
And thou shalt have the more merite.
If it be lent, than aftir soon,
The bountee and the thank is doon;
But, in love, free yeven thing
Requyrith a gret guerdoning.
Yeve it in yift al quit fully,
And make thy yift debonairly;
For men that yift [wol] holde more dere
That yeven is with gladsome chere.
That yift nought to preisen is
That man yeveth, maugre his.
Whan thou hast yeven thyn herte, as I

Have seid thee here [al] openly,
Than aventures shulle thee falle,
Which harde and hevy been withalle.
For oft whan thou bithenkist thee
Of thy loving, wher-so thou be,
Fro folk thou must depart in hy,
That noon perceyve thy malady,
But hyde thyn harm thou must alone,
And go forth sole, and make thy mone.
Thou shalt no whyl be in oo stat,
But whylom cold and whylom hat;
Now reed as rose, now yelowe and fade.
Such sorowe, I trowe, thou never hade;
Cotidien, ne [yit] quarteyne,
It is nat so ful of peyne.
For ofte tymes it shal falle
In love, among thy peynes alle,
That thou thy-self, al hoolly,
Foryeten shalt so utterly,
That many tymes thou shalt be
Stille as an ymage of tree,
Dom as a stoon, without stering
Of foot or hond, without speking.
Than, sone after al thy peyne,
To memorie shalt thou come ageyn,
As man abasshed wondre sore,
And after sighen more and more.
For wit thou wel, withouten wene,
In swich astat ful oft have been
That have the yvel of love assayd,
Wher-through thou art so dismayd.
'After, a thought shal take thee so,
That thy love is to fer thee fro:
Thou shalt say, "God, what may this be,
That I ne may my lady see?
Myne herte aloon is to her go,
And I abyde al sole in wo,
Departed fro myn owne thought,
And with myne eyen see right nought.
'"Alas, myn eyen sende I ne may,
My careful herte to convay!
Myn hertes gyde but they be,
I praise no-thing what ever they see.
Shul they abyde thanne? nay;
But goon visyte without delay
That myn herte desyreth so.
For certeynly, but-if they go,
A fool my-self I may wel holde,
Whan I ne see what myn herte wolde.
Wherfore I wol gon her to seen,
Or esed shal I never been,
But I have som tokening."
Then gost thou forth without dwelling;

But ofte thou faylest of thy desyre,
Er thou mayst come hir any nere,
And wastest in vayn thy passage.
Than fallest thou in a newe rage;
For want of sight thou ginnest morne,
And homward pensif dost retorne.
In greet mischeef than shalt thou be,
For than agayn shal come to thee
Sighes and pleyntes, with newe wo,
That no icching prikketh so.
Who wot it nought, he may go lere
Of hem that byen love so dere.
'No-thing thyn herte appesen may,
That oft thou wolt goon and assay,
If thou mayst seen, by aventure,
Thy lyves loy, thyn hertis cure;
So that, by grace if thou might
Atteyne of hir to have a sight,
Than shalt thou doon non other dede
But with that sight thyn eyen fede.
That faire fresh whan thou mayst see,
Thyn herte shal so ravisshed be,
That never thou woldest, thy thankis, lete,
Ne remove, for to see that swete.
The more thou seest in sothfastnesse,
The more thou coveytest of that swetnesse;
The more thyn herte brenneth in fyr,
The more thyn herte is in desyr.
For who considreth every del,
It may be lykned wondir wel,
The peyne of love, unto a fere;
For ever [the] more thou neighest nere
Thought, or who-so that it be,
For verray sothe I telle it thee,
The hatter ever shal thou brenne,
As experience shal thee kenne.
Wher-so [thou] comest in any cost,
Who is next fyr, he brenneth most.
And yit forsothe, for al thyn hete,
Though thou for love swelte and swete,
Ne for no-thing thou felen may
Thou shalt not willen to passe away.
And though thou go, yet must thee nede
Thenke al-day on hir fairhede,
Whom thou bihelde with so good wille;
And holde thysilf bigyled ille,
That thou ne haddest non hardement
To shewe hir ought of thyn entent.
Thyn herte ful sore thou wolt dispyse,
And eek repreve of cowardyse,
That thou, so dulle in every thing,

Were dom for drede, without speking.
Thou shalt eek thenke thou didest foly,
That thou were hir so faste by,
And durst not auntre thee to say
Som-thing, er thou cam away;
For thou haddist no more wonne,
To speke of hir whan thou bigonne:
But yif she wolde, for thy sake,
In armes goodly thee have take,
It shulde have be more worth to thee
Than of tresour greet plentee.
'Thus shalt thou morne and eek compleyn,
And gete enchesoun to goon ageyn
Unto thy walk, or to thy place,
Where thou biheld hir fleshly face.
And never, for fals suspeccioun,
Thou woldest finde occasioun
For to gon unto hir hous.
So art thou thanne desirous
A sight of hir for to have,
If thou thine honour mightest save,
Or any erand mightist make
Thider, for thy loves sake;
Ful fayn thou woldist, but for drede
Thou gost not, lest that men take hede.
Wherfore I rede, in thy going,
And also in thyn ageyn-coming,
Thou be wel war that men ne wit;
Feyne thee other cause than it
To go that weye, or faste by;
To hele wel is no folye.
And if so be it happe thee
That thou thy love ther mayst see,
In siker wyse thou hir salewe,
Wherwith thy colour wol transmewe,
And eke thy blood shal al to-quake,
Thyn hewe eek chaungen for hir sake.
But word and wit, with chere ful pale,
Shul wante for to telle thy tale.
And if thou mayst so fer-forth winne,
That thou [thy] resoun durst biginne,
And woldis seyn three thingis or mo,
Thou shalt ful scarsly seyn the two.
Though thou bithenke thee never so wel,
Thou shalt foryete yit somdel,
But-if thou dele with trecherye.
For fals lovers mowe al folye
Seyn, what hem lust, withouten drede,
They be so double in hir falshede;
For they in herte cunne thenke a thing
And seyn another, in hir speking.
And whan thy speche is endid al,
Right thus to thee it shal bifal;
If any word than come to minde,
That thou to seye hast left bihinde,
Than thou shalt brenne in greet martyr;
For thou shalt brenne as any fyr.
This is the stryf and eke the affray,
And the batail that lastith ay.
This bargeyn ende may never take,
But-if that she thy pees wil make.
'And whan the night is comen, anon
A thousand angres shal come upon.
To bedde as fast thou wolt thee dight,
Where thou shalt have but smal delyt;
For whan thou wenest for to slepe,
So ful of peyne shalt thou crepe,
Sterte in thy bedde aboute ful wyde,
And turne ful ofte on every syde;
Now dounward groffe, and now upright,
And walowe in wo the longe night,
Thyne armis shalt thou sprede abrede,
As man in werre were forwerreyd.
Than shal thee come a remembraunce
Of hir shape and hir semblaunce,
Wherto non other may be pere.
And wite thou wel, withoute were,
That thee shal [seme], somtyme that night,
That thou hast hir, that is so bright,
Naked bitwene thyn armes there,
Al sothfastnesse as though it were.
Thou shalt make castels than in Spayne,
And dreme of Ioye, al but in vayne,
And thee delyten of right nought,
Whyl thou so slomrest in that thought,
That is so swete and delitable,
The which, in soth, nis but a fable,
For it ne shal no whyle laste.
Than shalt thou sighe and wepe faste,
And say, "Dere god, what thing is this?
My dreme is turned al amis,
Which was ful swete and apparent,
But now I wake, it is al shent!
Now yede this mery thought away!
Twenty tymes upon a day
I wolde this thought wolde come ageyn,
For it alleggith wel my peyn.
It makith me ful of Ioyful thought,
It sleeth me, that it lastith noght.
A, lord! why nil ye me socoure,
The Ioye, I trowe, that I langoure?
The deth I wolde me shulde slo
Whyl I lye in hir armes two.
Myn harm is hard, withouten wene,

My greet unese ful ofte I mene.
But wolde Love do so I might
Have fully Ioye of hir so bright,
My peyne were quit me richely.
Allas, to greet a thing aske I!
It is but foly, and wrong wening,
To aske so outrageous a thing.
And who-so askith folily,
He moot be warned hastily;
And I ne wot what I may say,
I am so fer out of the way;
For I wolde have ful gret lyking
And ful gret Ioye of lasse thing.
For wolde she, of hir gentilnesse,
Withouten more, me onis kesse,
It were to me a greet guerdoun,
Relees of al my passioun.
But it is hard to come therto;
Al is but foly that I do,
So high I have myn herte set,
Where I may no comfort get.
I noot wher I sey wel or nought;
But this I wot wel in my thought,
That it were bet of hir aloon,
For to stint my wo and moon,
A loke on [me] y-cast goodly,
[Than] for to have, al utterly,
Of another al hool the pley.
A! lord! wher I shal byde the day
That ever she shal my lady be?
He is ful cured that may hir see.
A! god! whan shal the dawning spring?
To ly thus is an angry thing;
I have ne Ioye thus here to ly
Whan that my love is not me by.
A man to lyen hath gret disese,
Which may not slepe ne reste in ese.
I wolde it dawed, and were now day,
And that the night were went away;
For were it day, I wolde upryse.
A! slow sonne, shew thyn enpryse!
Speed thee to sprede thy bemis bright,
And chace the derknesse of the night,
To putte away the stoundes stronge,
Which in me lasten al to longe."
'The night shalt thou contene so,
Withoute rest, in peyne and wo;
If ever thou knewe of love distresse,
Thou shalt mowe lerne in that siknesse.
And thus enduring shalt thou ly,
And ryse on morwe up erly
Out of thy bedde, and harneys thee
Er ever dawning thou mayst see.

Al privily than shal thou goon,
What [weder] it be, thy-silf aloon,
For reyn, or hayl, for snow, for slete,
Thider she dwellith that is so swete,
The which may falle aslepe be,
And thenkith but litel upon thee.
Than shalt thou goon, ful foule aferd;
Loke if the gate be unsperd,
And waite without in wo and peyn,
Ful yvel a-cold in winde and reyn.
Than shal thou go the dore bifore,
If thou maist fynde any score,
Or hole, or reft, what ever it were;
Than shalt thou stoupe, and lay to ere,
If they within a-slepe be;
I mene, alle save thy lady free.
Whom waking if thou mayst aspye,
Go put thy-silf in Iupartye,
To aske grace, and thee bimene,
That she may wite, withouten wene,
That thou [a]night no rest hast had,
So sore for hir thou were bistad.
Wommen wel ought pitie to take
Of hem that sorwen for hir sake.
And loke, for love of that relyke,
That thou thenke non other lyke,
For [whom] thou hast so greet annoy,
Shall kisse thee er thou go away,
And hold that in ful gret deyntee.
And, for that no man shal thee see
Bifore the hous, ne in the way,
Loke thou be goon ageyn er day.
Suche coming, and such going,
Such hevinesse, and such walking,
Makith lovers, withouten wene,
Under hir clothes pale and lene,
For Love leveth colour ne cleernesse;
Who loveth trewe hath no fatnesse.
Thou shalt wel by thy-selfe see
That thou must nedis assayed be.
For men that shape hem other wey
Falsly hir ladies to bitray,
It is no wonder though they be fat;
With false othes hir loves they gat;
For oft I see suche losengeours
Fatter than abbatis or priours.
'Yet with o thing I thee charge,
That is to seye, that thou be large
Unto the mayd that hir doth serve,
So best hir thank thou shalt deserve.
Yeve hir yiftes, and get hir grace,
For so thou may [hir] thank purchace,
That she thee worthy holde and free,

Thy lady, and alle that may thee see.
Also hir servauntes worshipe ay,
And plese as muche as thou may;
Gret good through hem may come to thee,
Bicause with hir they been prive.
They shal hir telle how they thee fand
Curteis and wys, and wel doand,
And she shal preyse [thee] wel the mare.
Loke out of londe thou be not fare;
And if such cause thou have, that thee
Bihoveth to gone out of contree,
Leve hool thyn herte in hostage,
Til thou ageyn make thy passage.
Thenk long to see the swete thing
That hath thyn herte in hir keping.
'Now have I told thee, in what wyse
A lover shal do me servyse.
Do it than, if thou wolt have
The mede that thou aftir crave.'
Whan Love al this had boden me,
I seide him: —'Sire, how may it be
That lovers may in such manere
Endure the peyne ye have seid here?
I merveyle me wonder faste,
How any man may live or laste
In such peyne, and such brenning,
In sorwe and thought, and such sighing,
Ay unrelesed wo to make,
Whether so it be they slepe or wake.
In such annoy continuely,
As helpe me god, this merveile I,
How man, but he were maad of stele,
Might live a month, such peynes to fele.'
The God of Love than seide me,
'Freend, by the feith I owe to thee,
May no man have good, but he it by.
A man loveth more tendirly
The thing that he hath bought most dere.
For wite thou wel, withouten were,
In thank that thing is taken more,
For which a man hath suffred sore.
Certis, no wo ne may atteyne
Unto the sore of love's peyne.
Non yvel therto ne may amounte,
No more than a man [may] counte
The dropes that of the water be.
For drye as wel the grete see
Thou mightist, as the harmes telle
Of hem that with Love dwelle
In servyse; for peyne hem sleeth,
And that ech man wolde flee the deeth,
And trowe they shulde never escape,
Nere that hope couthe hem make
Glad as man in prisoun set,
And may not geten for to et
But barly-breed, and watir pure,
And lyeth in vermin and in ordure;
With alle this, yit can he live,
Good hope such comfort hath him yive,
Which maketh wene that he shal be
Delivered and come to liberte;
In fortune is [his] fulle trust.
Though he lye in strawe or dust,
In hope is al his susteyning.
And so for lovers, in hir wening,
Whiche Love hath shit in his prisoun;
Good-Hope is hir salvacioun.
Good-Hope, how sore that they smerte,
Yeveth hem bothe wille and herte
To profre hir body to martyre;
For Hope so sore doth hem desyre
To suffre ech harm that men devyse,
For loye that aftir shal aryse.
'Hope, in desire [to] cacche victorie;
In Hope, of love is al the glorie.
For Hope is al that love may yive;
Nere Hope, ther shulde no lover live.
Blessid be Hope, which with desyre
Avaunceth lovers in such manere.
Good-Hope is curteis for to plese,
To kepe lovers from al disese.
Hope kepith his lond, and wol abyde,
For any peril that may betyde;
For Hope to lovers, as most cheef,
Doth hem enduren al mischeef;
Hope is her help, whan mister is.
And I shal yeve thee eek, y-wis,
Three other thingis, that greet solas
Doth to hem that be in my las.
'The firste good that may be founde,
To hem that in my lace be bounde,
Is Swete-Thought, for to recorde
Thing wherwith thou canst accorde
Best in thyn herte, wher she be;
Thought in absence is good to thee.
Whan any lover doth compleyne,
And liveth in distresse and peyne,
Than Swete-Thought shal come, as blyve,
Awey his angre for to dryve.
It makith lovers have remembraunce
Of comfort, and of high plesaunce,
That Hope hath hight him for to winne.
For Thought anoon then shal biginne,
As fer, god wot, as he can finde,

To make a mirrour of his minde;
For to biholde he wol not lette.
Hir person he shal afore him sette,
Hir laughing eyen, persaunt and clere,
Hir shape, hir fourme, hir goodly chere,
Hir mouth that is so gracious,
So swete, and eek so saverous;
Of alle hir fetures he shal take heede,
His eyen with alle hir limes fede.
'Thus Swete-Thenking shal aswage
The peyne of lovers, and hir rage.
Thy Ioye shal double, withoute gesse,
Whan thou thenkist on hir semlinesse,
Or of hir laughing, or of hir chere,
That to thee made thy lady dere.
This comfort wol I that thou take;
And if the next thou wolt forsake
Which is not lesse saverous,
Thou shuldist been to daungerous.
'The secounde shal be Swete-Speche,
That hath to many oon be leche,
To bringe hem out of wo and were,
And helpe many a bachilere;
And many a lady sent socoure,
That have loved par-amour,
Through speking, whan they mighten here
Of hir lovers, to hem so dere.
To [hem] it voidith al hir smerte,
The which is closed in hir herte.
In herte it makith hem glad and light,
Speche, whan they mowe have sight.
And therfore now it cometh to minde,
In olde dawes, as I finde,
That clerkis writen that hir knewe,
Ther was a lady fresh of hewe,
Which of hir love made a song
On him for to remembre among,
In which she seide, "Whan that I here
Speken of him that is so dere,
To me it voidith al [my] smerte,
Y-wis, he sit so nere myn herte.
To speke of him, at eve or morwe,
It cureth me of al my sorwe.
To me is noon so high pleasaunce
As of his persone daliaunce."
She wist ful wel that Swete-Speking
Comfortith in ful muche thing.
Hir love she had ful wel assayed,
Of him she was ful wel apayed;
To speke of him hir Ioye was set.
Therfore I rede thee that thou get
A felowe that can wel concele
And kepe thy counsel, and wel hele,
To whom go shewe hoolly thyn herte,
Bothe wele and wo, Ioye and smerte:
To gete comfort to him thou go,
And privily, bitween yow two,
Ye shal speke of that goodly thing,
That hath thyn herte in hir keping;
Of hir beaute and hir semblaunce,
And of hir goodly countenaunce.
Of al thy state thou shalt him sey,
And aske him counseil how thou may
Do any thing that may hir plese;
For it to thee shal do gret ese,
That he may wite thou trust him so,
Bothe of thy wele and of thy wo.
And if his herte to love be set,
His companye is muche the bet,
For resoun wol, he shewe to thee
Al uttirly his privite;
And what she is he loveth so,
To thee pleynly he shal undo,
Withoute drede of any shame,
Bothe telle hir renoun and hir name.
Than shal he forther, ferre and nere,
And namely to thy lady dere,
In siker wyse; ye, every other
Shal helpen as his owne brother,
In trouthe withoute doublenesse,
And kepen cloos in sikernesse.
For it is noble thing, in fay,
To have a man thou darst say
Thy prive counsel every del;
For that wol comfort thee right wel,
And thou shalt holde thee wel apayed,
Whan such a freend thou hast assayed.
'The thridde good of greet comfort
That yeveth to lovers most disport,
Comith of sight and biholding,
That clepid is Swete-Loking,
The whiche may noon ese do,
Whan thou art fer thy lady fro;
Wherfore thou prese alwey to be
In place, where thou mayst hir se.
For it is thing most amerous,
Most delitable and saverous,
For to aswage a mannes sorowe,
To sene his lady by the morowe.
For it is a ful noble thing
Whan thyn eyen have meting
With that relyke precious,
Wherof they be so desirous.
But al day after, soth it is,
They have no drede to faren amis,

They dreden neither wind ne reyn,
Ne [yit] non other maner peyn.
For whan thyn eyen were thus in blis,
Yit of hir curtesye, y-wis,
Aloon they can not have hir Ioye,
But to the herte they [it] convoye;
Part of hir blis to him [they] sende,
Of al this harm to make an ende.
The eye is a good messangere,
Which can to the herte in such manere
Tidyngis sende, that [he] hath seen,
To voide him of his peynes cleen.
Wherof the herte reioyseth so
That a gret party of his wo
Is voided, and put awey to flight.
Right as the derknesse of the night
Is chased with clerenesse of the mone,
Right so is al his wo ful sone
Devoided clene, whan that the sight
Biholden may that fresshe wight
That the herte desyreth so,
That al his derknesse is ago;
For than the herte is al at ese,
Whan they seen that [that] may hem plese.

'Now have I thee declared alout,
Of that thou were in drede and dout;
For I have told thee feithfully
What thee may curen utterly,
And alle lovers that wole be
Feithful, and ful of stabilite.
Good-Hope alwey kepe by thy syde,
And Swete-Thought make eek abyde,
Swete-Loking and Swete-Speche;
Of alle thyn harmes they shal be leche.
Of every thou shalt have greet plesaunce;
If thou canst byde in sufferaunce,
And serve wel without feyntyse,
Thou shalt be quit of thyn empryse,
With more guerdoun, if that thou live;
But al this tyme this I thee yive.'
The God of Love whan al the day
Had taught me, as ye have herd say,
And enfourmed compendiously,
He vanished awey al sodeynly,
And I alone lefte, al sole,
So ful of compleynt and of dole,
For I saw no man ther me by.
My woundes me greved wondirly;
Me for to curen no-thing I knew,
Save the botoun bright of hew,
Wheron was set hoolly my thought;
Of other comfort knew I nought,
But it were through the God of Love;
I knew nat elles to my bihove
That might me ese or comfort gete,
But-if he wolde him entermete.
The roser was, withoute doute,
Closed with an hegge withoute,
As ye to-forn have herd me seyn;
And fast I bisied, and wolde fayn
Have passed the haye, if I might
Have geten in by any slight
Unto the botoun so fair to see.
But ever I dradde blamed to be,
If men wolde have suspeccioun
That I wolde of entencioun
Have stole the roses that ther were;
Therfore to entre I was in fere.
But at the last, as I bithought
Whether I sholde passe or nought,
I saw come with a gladde chere
To me, a lusty bachelere,
Of good stature, and of good hight,
And Bialacoil forsothe he hight.
Sone he was to Curtesy,
And he me graunted ful gladly
The passage of the outer hay,
And seide: — 'Sir, how that ye may
Passe, if [it] your wille be,
The fresshe roser for to see,
And ye the swete savour fele.
Your warrant may [I be] right wele;
So thou thee kepe fro folye,
Shal no man do the vilanye.
If I may helpe you in ought,
I shal not feyne, dredeth nought;
For I am bounde to your servyse,
Fully devoide of feyntyse.'
Than unto Bialacoil saide I,
'I thank you, sir, ful hertely,
And your biheest [I] take at gree,
That ye so goodly profer me;
To you it cometh of greet fraunchyse,
That ye me profer your servyse.'
Than aftir, ful deliverly,
Through the breres anoon wente I,
Whereof encombred was the hay.
I was wel plesed, the soth to say,
To see the botoun fair and swote,
So fresshe spronge out of the rote.
And Bialacoil me served well,
Whan I so nygh me mighte fele
Of the botoun the swete odour,
And so lusty hewed of colour.
But than a cherl (foule him bityde!)

Bisyde the roses gan him hyde,
To kepe the roses of that roser,
Of whom the name was Daunger.
This cherl was hid there in the greves,
Covered with grasse and with leves,
To spye and take whom that he fond
Unto that roser putte an hond.
He was not sole, for ther was mo;
For with him were other two
Of wikkid maners, and yvel fame.
That oon was clepid, by his name,
Wikked-Tonge, god yeve him sorwe!
For neither at eve, ne at morwe,
He can of no man [no] good speke;
On many a lust man doth he wreke.
Ther was a womman eek, that hight
Shame, that, who can reken right,
Trespas was hir fadir name,
Hir moder Resoun; and thus was Shame
[On lyve] brought of these ilk two.
And yit had Trespas never ado
With Resoun, ne never ley hir by,
He was so hidous and ugly,
I mene, this that Trespas hight;
But Resoun conceyveth, of a sight,
Shame, of that I spak aforn.
And whan that Shame was thus born,
It was ordeyned, that Chastitee
Shulde of the roser lady be,
Which, of the botouns more and las,
With sondry folk assailed was,
That she ne wiste what to do.
For Venus hir assailith so,
That night and day from hir she stal
Botouns and roses over-al.
To Resoun than prayeth Chastitee,
Whom Venus flemed over the see,
That she hir doughter wolde hir lene,
To kepe the roser fresh and grene.
Anoon Resoun to Chastitee
Is fully assented that it be,
And grauntid hir, at hir request,
That Shame, bicause she is honest,
Shal keper of the roser be.
And thus to kepe it ther were three,
That noon shulde hardy be ne bold
(Were he yong, or were he old)
Ageyn hir wille awey to bere
Botouns ne roses, that ther were.
I had wel sped, had I not been
Awayted with these three, and seen.
For Bialacoil, that was so fair,
So gracious and debonair,

Quitte him to me ful curteisly,
And, me to plese, bad that I
Shuld draw me to the botoun nere;
Prese in, to touche the rosere
Which bar the roses, he yaf me leve;
This graunt ne might but litel greve.
And for he saw it lyked me,
Right nygh the botoun pullede he
A leef al grene, and yaf me that,
The which ful nygh the botoun sat;
I made [me] of that leef ful queynt.
And whan I felte I was aqueynt
With Bialacoil, and so prive,
I wende al at my wille had be.
Than wex I hardy for to tel
To Bialacoil how me bifel
Of Love, that took and wounded me,
And seide: 'Sir, so mote I thee,
I may no loye have in no wyse,
Upon no syde, but it ryse;
For sithe (if I shal not feyne)
In herte I have had so gret peyne,
So gret annoy, and such affray,
That I ne wot what I shal say;
I drede your wrath to disserve.
Lever me were, that knyves kerve
My body shulde in pecis smalle,
Than in any wyse it shulde falle
That ye wratthed shulde been with me.'
'Sey boldely thy wille,' quod he,
'I nil be wroth, if that I may,
For nought that thou shalt to me say.'
Thanne seide I, 'Sir, not you displese
To knowen of my greet unese,
In which only love hath me brought;
For peynes greet, disese and thought,
Fro day to day he doth me drye;
Supposeth not, sir, that I lye.
In me fyve woundes dide he make,
The sore of whiche shal never slake
But ye the botoun graunte me,
Which is most passaunt of beautee,
My lyf, my deth, and my martyre,
And tresour that I most desyre.'
Than Bialacoil, affrayed all,
Seyde, 'Sir, it may not fall;
That ye desire, it may not ryse.
What? wolde ye shende me in this wyse?
A mochel foole than I were,
If I suffrid you awey to bere
The fresh botoun, so fair of sight.
For it were neither skile ne right
Of the roser ye broke the rind,

Or take the rose aforn his kind ;
Ye ar not courteys to aske it.
Lat it stil on the roser sit,
And growe til it amended be,
And parfitly come to beaute.
I nolde not that it pulled wer
Fro the roser that it ber,
To me it is so leef and dere.'
With that sterte out anoon Daungere,
Out of the place where he was hid.
His malice in his chere was kid ;
Ful greet he was, and blak of hewe,
Sturdy and hidous, who-so him knewe ;
Like sharp urchouns his here was growe,
His eyes rede as the fire-glow ;
His nose frounced ful kirked stood,
He com criand as he were wood,
And seide, 'Bialacoil, tell me why
Thou bringest hider so boldly
Him that so nygh [is] the roser ?
Thou worchist in a wrong maner ;
He thenkith to dishonour thee,
Thou art wel worthy to have maugree
To late him of the roser wit ;
Who serveth a feloun is yvel quit.
Thou woldist have doon greet bountee,
And he with shame wolde quyte thee.
Flee hennes, felowe ! I rede thee go !
It wanteth litel I wol thee slo ;
For Bialacoil ne knew thee nought,
Whan thee to serve he sette his thought ;
For thou wolt shame him, if thou might,
Bothe ageyn resoun and right.
I wol no more in thee affye,
That comest so slyghly for tespye ;
For it preveth wonder wel,
Thy slight and tresoun every del.'
I durst no more ther make abode,
For the cherl, he was so wode ;
So gan he threten and manace,
And thurgh the haye he did me chace.
For feer of him I tremblid and quook,
So cherlishly his heed he shook ;
And seide, if eft he might me take,
I shulde not from his hondis scape.
Than Bialacoil is fled and mate,
And I al sole, disconsolate,
Was left aloon in peyne and thought ;
For shame, to deth I was nygh brought.
Than thought I on myn high foly,
How that my body, utterly,
Was yeve to peyne and to martyre ;
And therto hadde I so gret yre,
That I ne durst the hayes passe ;
There was non hope, there was no grace.
I trowe never man wiste of peyne,
But he were laced in Loves cheyne ;
Ne no man [wot], and sooth it is,
But-if he love, what anger is.
Love holdith his heest to me right wele,
Whan peyne he seide I shulde fele.
Non herte may thenke, ne tunge seyne,
A quarter of my wo and peyne.
I might not with the anger laste ;
Myn herte in poynt was for to braste,
Whan I thought on the rose, that so
Was through Daunger cast me froo.
A long whyl stood I in that state,
Til that me saugh so mad and mate
The lady of the highe ward,
Which from hir tour lokid thiderward.
Resoun men clepe that lady,
Which from hir tour deliverly
Come doun to me withouten more.
But she was neither yong, ne hore,
Ne high ne low, ne fat ne lene,
But best, as it were in a mene.
Hir eyen two were cleer and light
As any candel that brenneth bright ;
And on hir heed she hadde a crown.
Hir semede wel an high persoun ;
For rounde enviroun, hir crownet
Was ful of riche stonis fret.
Hir goodly semblaunt, by devys,
I trowe were maad in paradys ;
Nature had never such a grace,
To forge a werk of such compace.
For certeyn, but the letter lye,
God him-silf, that is so high,
Made hir aftir his image,
And yaf hir sith sich avauntage,
That she hath might and seignorye
To kepe men from al folye ;
Who-so wole trowe hir lore,
Ne may offenden nevermore.
And whyl I stood thus derk and pale,
Resoun bigan to me hir tale ;
She seide : 'Al hayl, my swete frend !
Foly and childhood wol thee shend,
Which thee have put in greet affray ;
Thou hast bought dere the tyme of May,
That made thyn herte mery to be.
In yvel tyme thou wentist to see
The gardin, wherof Ydilnesse
Bar the keye, and was maistresse
Whan thou yedest in the daunce

With hir, and haddest aqueyntaunce;
Hir aqueyntaunce is perilous,
First softe, and aftir[ward] noyous; 3230
She hath [thee] trasshed, withoute ween;
The God of Love had thee not seen,
Ne hadde Ydilnesse thee conveyed
In the verger where Mirthe him pleyed.
If Foly have supprised thee, 3235
Do so that it recovered be;
And be wel war to take no more
Counsel, that greveth aftir sore;
He is wys that wol himsilf chastyse.
And though a young man in any wyse
Trespace among, and do foly, 3241
Lat him not tarye, but hastily
Lat him amende what so be mis.
And eek I counseile thee, y-wis,
The God of Love hoolly foryet, 3245
That hath thee in sich peyne set,
And thee in herte tormented so.
I can nat seen how thou mayst go
Other weyes to garisoun;
For Daunger, that is so feloun, 3250
Felly purposith thee to werrey,
Which is ful cruel, the soth to sey.
'And yit of Daunger cometh no blame,
In reward of my doughter Shame,
Which hath the roses in hir warde, 3255
As she that may be no musarde.
And Wikked-Tunge is with these two,
That suffrith no man thider go;
For er a thing be do, he shal,
Where that he cometh, over-al, 3260
In fourty places, if it be sought.
Seye thing that never was doon ne wrought;
So moche tresoun is in his male,
Of falsnesse for to [feyne] a tale.
Thou delest with angry folk, y-wis; 3265
Wherfor to thee [it] bettir is
From these folk awey to fare,
For they wol make thee live in care.
This is the yvel that Love they calle,
Wherin ther is but foly alle, 3270
For love is foly everydel;
Who loveth, in no wyse may do wel,
Ne sette his thought on no good werk.
His scole he lesith, if he be clerk;
Of other craft eek if he be, 3275
He shal not thryve therin; for he
In love shal have more passioun
Than monke, hermyte, or chanoun.
The peyne is hard, out of mesure,
The Ioye may eek no whyl endure; 3280
And in the possessioun
Is muche tribulacioun;
The Ioye it is so short-lasting,
And but in happe is the geting;
For I see ther many in travaille, 3285
That atte laste foule fayle.
I was no-thing thy counseler,
Whan thou were maad the homager
Of God of Love to hastily;
Ther was no wisdom, but foly. 3290
Thyn herte was loly, but not sage,
When thou were brought in sich a rage,
To yelde thee so redily,
And to Love, of his gret maistry.
'I rede thee Love awey to dryve, 3295
That makith thee recche not of thy lyve.
The foly more fro day to day
Shal growe, but thou it putte away.
Take with thy teeth the bridel faste,
To daunte thyn herte; and eek thee caste, 3300
If that thou mayst, to gete defence
For to redresse thy first offence.
Who-so his herte alwey wol leve,
Shal finde among that shal him greve.'
Whan I hir herd thus me chastyse, 3305
I answerd in ful angry wyse.
I prayed hir cessen of hir speche,
Outher to chastyse me or teche,
To bidde me my thought refreyne,
Which Love hath caught in his demeyne:— 3310
'What? wene ye Love wol consent,
That me assailith with bowe bent,
To draw myn herte out of his honde.
Which is so quikly in his bonde?
That ye counsayle, may never be; 3315
For whan he first arested me,
He took myn herte so hool him til,
That it is no-thing at my wil;
He [taughte] it so him for to obey,
That he it sparred with a key. 3320
I pray yow lat me be al stille.
For ye may wel, if that ye wille,
Your wordis waste in idilnesse;
For utterly, withouten gesse,
Al that ye seyn is but in veyne. 3325
Me were lever dye in the peyne,
Than Love to me-ward shulde arette
Falsheed, or tresoun on me sette.
I wol me gete prys or blame,
And love trewe, to save my name; 3330

Who me chastysith, I him hate.'
With that word Resoun wente hir gate,
Whan she saugh for no sermoning
She might me fro my foly bring.
Than dismayed, I lefte all sool,
Forwery, forwandred as a fool,
For I ne knew no chevisaunce.
Than fel into my remembraunce,
How Love bade me to purveye
A felowe, to whom I mighte seye
My counsel and my privete,
For that shulde muche availe me.
With that bithought I me, that I
Hadde a felowe faste by,
Trewe and siker, curteys, and hend,
And he was called by name a Freend;
A trewer felowe was no-wher noon.
In haste to him I wente anoon,
And to him al my wo I tolde,
Fro him right nought I wold withholde.
I tolde him al withoute were,
And made my compleynt on Daungere,
How for to see he was hidous,
And to-me-ward contrarious;
The whiche through his cruelte
Was in poynt to have meygned me;
With Bialacoil whan he me sey
Within the gardyn walke and pley,
Fro me he made him for to go,
And I bilefte aloon in wo;
I durst no lenger with him speke,
For Daunger seide he wolde be wreke,
Whan that he sawe how I wente
The fresshe botoun for to hente,
If I were hardy to come near
Betwene the hay and the roser.
This Freend, whan he wiste of my thought,
Me discomforted me right nought,
Sat seide, 'Felowe, be not so mad,
Ne so abaysshed nor bistad.
Hy-silf I knowe ful wel Daungere,
And how he is feers of his chere,
At prime temps, Love to manace;
Ful ofte I have ben in his caas.
A feloun first though that he be,
Aftir thou shalt him souple see.
Of long passed I knew him wele;
Ungoodly first though men him fele,
He wol meek aftir, in his bering,
Been, for service and obeysshing.
I shal thee telle what thou shalt do: —
Mekely I rede thou go him to,
Of herte pray him specialy
Of thy trespace to have mercy,
And hote him wel, [him] here to plese,
That thou shalt nevermore him displese.
Who can best serve of flatery,
Shal plese Daunger most uttirly.'
My Freend hath seid to me so wel,
That he me esid hath somdel,
And eek allegged of my torment;
For through him had I hardement
Agayn to Daunger for to go,
To preve if I might meke him so.
To Daunger cam I, al ashamed,
The which aforn me hadde blamed,
Desyring for to pese my wo;
But over hegge durst I not go,
For he forbad me the passage.
I fond him cruel in his rage,
And in his hond a gret burdoun.
To him I knelid lowe adoun,
Ful meke of port, and simple of chere,
And seide, 'Sir, I am comen here
Only to aske of you mercy.
That greveth me, [sir], ful gretly
That ever my lyf I wratthed you,
But for to amende I am come now,
With al my might, bothe loude and stille,
To doon right at your owne wille;
For Love made me for to do
That I have trespassed hidirto;
Fro whom I ne may withdrawe myn herte;
Yit shal I never, for Ioy ne smerte,
What so bifalle, good or ille,
Offende more ageyn your wille.
Lever I have endure disese
Than do that shulde you displese.
'I you require and pray, that ye
Of me have mercy and pitee,
To stinte your yre that greveth so,
That I wol swere for evermo
To be redressid at your lyking,
If I trespasse in any thing;
Save that I pray thee graunte me
A thing that may nat warned be,
That I may love, al only;
Non other thing of you aske I.
I shal doon elles wel, y-wis,
If of your grace ye graunte me this.
And ye [ne] may not letten me,
For wel wot ye that love is free,
And I shall loven, [sith] that I wil,
Who-ever lyke it wel or il;

And yit ne wold I for al Fraunce,
Do thing to do you displesaunce.'
Than Daunger fil in his entent
For to foryeve his maltalent;
But all his wratthe yit at laste
He hath relesed, I preyde so faste:
Shortly he seide, 'Thy request
Is not to mochel dishonest;
Ne I wol not werne it thee,
For yit no-thing engreveth me.
For though thou love thus evermore,
To me is neither softe ne sore.
Love wher the list; what recchith me,
So [thou] fer fro my roses be?
Trust not on me, for noon assay,
In any tyme to passe the hay.'
Thus hath he graunted my prayere.
Than wente I forth, withouten were,
Unto my Freend, and tolde him al,
Which was right Ioyful of my tale.
He seide, 'Now goth wel thyn affaire
He shal to thee be debonaire.
Though he aforn was dispitous,
He shal heeraftir be gracious.
If he were touchid on som good veyne,
He shuld yit rewen on thy peyne.
Suffre, I rede, and no boost make,
Til thou at good mes mayst him take.
By suffraunce, and [by] wordis softe,
A man may overcomen ofte
Him that aforn he hadde in drede,
In bookis sothly as I red.'
Thus hath my Freend with gret comfort
Avaunced me with high disport,
Which wolde me good as mich as I.
And thanne anoon ful sodeynly
I took my leve, and streight I went
Unto the hay; for gret talent
I had to seen the fresh botoun,
Wherin lay my salvacioun;
And Daunger took kepe, if that I
Kepe him covenaunt trewly.
So sore I dradde his manasing,
I durst not breke[n] his bidding;
For, lest that I were of him shent,
I brak not his comaundement,
For to purchase his good wil.
It was [hard] for to come ther-til,
His mercy was to fer bihinde;
I wepte, for I ne might it finde.
I compleyned and sighed sore,
And languisshed evermore,

For I durst not over go
Unto the rose I loved so.
Thurghout my deming outerly,
[Than] had he knowlege certeinly,
[That] Love me ladde in sich a wyse,
That in me ther was no feyntyse,
Falsheed, ne no trecherye.
And yit he, ful of vilanye,
Of disdeyne, and cruelte,
On me ne wolde have pite,
His cruel wil for to refreyne,
Though I wepe alwey, and compleyne.
And while I was in this torment,
Were come of grace, by god sent,
Fraunchyse, and with hir Pite
Fulfild the botoun of bountee.
They go to Daunger anon-right
To forther me with all hir might,
And helpe in worde and in dede,
For wel they saugh that it was nede.
First, of hir grace, dame Fraunchyse
Hath taken [word] of this empryse:
She seide, 'Daunger, gret wrong ye do
To worche this man so muche wo,
Or pynen him so angerly;
It is to you gret vilany.
I can not see why, ne how,
That he hath trespassed ageyn you,
Save that he loveth; wherefore ye shulde
The more in cherete of him holde.
The force of love makith him do this;
Who wolde him blame he dide amis?
He leseth more than ye may do;
His peyne is hard, ye may see, lo!
And Love in no wyse wolde consente
That [he] have power to repente;
For though that quik ye wolde him sloo,
Fro Love his herte may not go.
Now, swete sir, is it your ese
Him for to angre or disese?
Allas, what may it you avaunce
To doon to him so greet grevaunce?
What worship is it agayn him take,
Or on your man a werre make,
Sith he so lowly every wyse
Is redy, as ye lust devyse?
If Love hath caught him in his lace,
You for tobeye in every caas,
And been your suget at your wille,
Shulde ye therfore willen him ille?
Ye shulde him spare more, al-out,
Than him that is bothe proud and stout.
Curtesye wol that ye socour

Hem that ben meke undir your cure.
His herte is hard, that wole not meke,
Whan men of mekenesse him biseke.'
'That is certeyn,' seide Pite;
'We see ofte that humilitee
Bothe ire, and also felonye
Venquissheth, and also melancolye;
To stonde forth in such duresse,
This crueltee and wikkednesse.
Wherfore I pray you, sir Daungere,
For to mayntene no lenger here
Such cruel werre agayn your man,
As hoolly youres as ever he can;
Nor that ye worchen no more wo
On this caytif that languisshith so,
Which wol no more to you trespasse,
But put him hoolly in your grace.
His offense ne was but lyte;
The God of Love it was to wyte,
That he your thral so gretly is,
And if ye harm him, ye doon amis;
For he hath had full hard penaunce,
Sith that ye refte him thaqueyntaunce
Of Bialacoil, his moste Ioye,
Which alle his peynes might acoye.
He was biforn anoyed sore,
But than ye doubled him wel more;
For he of blis hath ben ful bare,
Sith Bialacoil was fro him fare.
Love hath to him do greet distresse,
He hath no nede of more duresse.
Voideth from him your ire, I rede;
Ye may not winnen in this dede.
Makith Bialacoil repeire ageyn,
And haveth pite upon his peyn;
For Fraunchise wol, and I, Pite,
That merciful to him ye be;
And sith that she and I accorde,
Have upon him misericorde;
For I you pray, and eek moneste,
Nought to refusen our requeste;
For he is hard and fel of thought,
That for us two wol do right nought.'
Daunger ne might no more endure,
He meked him unto mesure.
'I wol in no wyse,' seith Daungere,
'Denye that ye have asked here;
It were to greet uncurtesye.
I wol ye have the companye
Of Bialacoil, as ye devyse;
I wol him letten in no wyse.'
To Bialacoil than wente in hy
Fraunchyse, and seide full curteisly: —
'Ye have to longe be deignous
Unto this lover, and daungerous,
Fro him to withdrawe your presence,
Which hath do to him grete offence,
That ye not wolde upon him see;
Wherfore a sorowful man is he.
Shape ye to paye him, and to plese,
Of my love if ye wol have ese.
Fulfil his wil, sith that ye knowe
Daunger is daunted and brought lowe
Thurgh help of me and of Pite;
You [thar] no more afered be.'
'I shal do right as ye wil,'
Saith Bialacoil, 'for it is skil,
Sith Daunger wol that it so be.'
Than Fraunchise hath him sent to me.
Bialacoil at the biginning
Salued me in his coming.
No straungenes was in him seen,
No more than he ne had wrathed been.
As faire semblaunt than shewed he me,
And goodly, as aforn did he;
And by the honde, withouten doute,
Within the haye, right al aboute
He ladde me, with right good chere,
Al environ the vergere,
That Daunger had me chased fro.
Now have I leve over-al to go;
Now am I raised, at my devys,
Fro helle unto paradys.
Thus Bialacoil, of gentilnesse,
With alle his peyne and besinesse,
Hath shewed me, only of grace,
The estres of the swote place.
I saw the rose, whan I was nigh,
Was gretter woxen, and more high,
Fresh, rody, and fair of hewe,
Of colour ever yliche newe.
And whan I had it longe seen,
I saugh that through the leves grene
The rose spredde to spanishing;
To sene it was a goodly thing.
But it ne was so spred on brede,
That men within might knowe the sede;
For it covert was and [en]close
Bothe with the leves and with the rose.
The stalk was even and grene upright,
It was theron a goodly sight;
And wel the better, withouten wene,
For the seed was not [y]-sene.
Ful faire it spradde, [god it blesse!]
For suche another, as I gesse,
Aforn ne was, ne more vermayle

I was abawed for merveyle,
For ever, the fairer that it was,
The more I am bounden in Loves laas.
Longe I abood there, soth to saye,
Til Bialacoil I gan to praye,
Whan that I saw him in no wyse
To me warnen his servyse,
That he me wolde graunte a thing,
Which to remembre is wel sitting;
This is to sayne, that of his grace
He wolde me yeve leyser and space
To me that was so desirous
To have a kissing precious
Of the goodly freshe rose,
That swetely smelleth in my nose;
'For if it you displesed nought,
I wolde gladly, as I have sought,
Have a cos therof freely
Of your yeft; for certainly
I wol non have but by your leve,
So loth me were you for to greve.'
He sayde, 'Frend, so god me spede,
Of Chastite I have suche drede,
Thou shuldest not warned be for me,
But I dar not, for Chastite.
Agayn hir dar I not misdo,
For alwey biddeth she me so
To yeve no lover leve to kisse;
For who therto may winnen, y-wis,
He of the surplus of the pray
May live in hope to get som day.
For who so kissing may attayne,
Of loves peyne hath, soth to sayne,
The beste and most avenaunt,
And ernest of the remenaunt.'
Of his answere I syghed sore;
I durst assaye him tho no more,
I had such drede to greve him ay.
A man shulde not to muche assaye
To chafe his frend out of mesure,
Nor put his lyf in aventure;
For no man at the firste stroke
Ne may nat felle doun an oke;
Nor of the reisins have the wyne,
Til grapes rype and wel afyne
Be sore embressid, I you ensure,
And drawen out of the pressure.
But I, forpeyned wonder stronge,
[Thought] that I abood right longe
Aftir the kis, in peyne and wo,
Sith I to kis desyred so:
Til that, [rewing] on my distresse,
Ther [to me] Venus the goddesse,
Which ay werreyeth Chastite,
Came of hir grace, to socoure me,
Whos might is knowe fer and wyde,
For she is modir of Cupyde,
The God of Love, blinde as stoon,
That helpith lovers many oon.
This lady brought in hir right hond
Of brenning fyr a blasing brond;
Wherof the flawme and hote fyr
Hath many a lady in desyr
Of love brought, and sore het,
And in hir servise hir hertes set.
This lady was of good entayle,
Right wondirful of apparayle;
By hir atyre so bright and shene,
Men might perceyve wel, and seen,
She was not of religioun.
Nor I nil make mencioun
Nor of [hir] robe, nor of tresour,
Of broche, [nor] of hir rich attour;
Ne of hir girdil aboute hir syde,
For that I nil not long abyde.
But knowith wel, that certeynly
She was arayed richely.
Devoyd of pryde certeyn she was;
To Bialacoil she wente a pas,
And to him shortly, in a clause,
She seide: 'Sir, what is the cause
Ye been of port so daungerous
Unto this lover, and denyous,
To graunte him no-thing but a kis?
To werne it him ye doon amis;
Sith wel ye wote, how that he
Is Loves servaunt, as ye may see,
And hath beaute, wher-through [he] is
Worthy of love to have the blis.
How he is semely, biholde and see,
How he is fair, how he is free,
How he is swote and debonair,
Of age yong, lusty, and fair.
Ther is no lady so hauteyne,
Duchesse, countesse, ne chasteleyne,
That I nolde holde hir ungoodly
For to refuse him outerly.
His breeth is also good and swete,
And eke his lippis rody, and mete
Only to pleyen, and to kisse.
Graunte him a kis, of gentilnesse!
His teeth arn also whyte and clene;
Me thinkith wrong, withouten wene,
If ye now werne him, trustith me,
To graunte that a kis have he;
The lasse [to] helpe him that ye haste,

The more tyme shul ye waste.'
Whan the flawme of the verry brond,
That Venus brought in hir right hond,
Had Bialacoil with hete smete,
Anoon he bad, withouten lette,
Graunte to me the rose kisse.
Than of my peyne I gan to lisse,
And to the rose anoon wente I,
And kissid it ful feithfully.
Thar no man aske if I was blythe,
Whan the savour soft and lythe
Strook to myn herte withoute more,
And me alegged of my sore,
So was I ful of Ioye and blisse.
It is fair sich a flour to kisse,
It was so swote and saverous.
I might not be so anguisshous,
That I mote glad and Ioly be,
Whan that I remembre me.
Yit ever among, sothly to seyn,
I suffre noye and moche peyn.
The see may never be so stil,
That with a litel wind it [nil]
Overwhelme and turne also,
As it were wood, in wawis go.
Aftir the calm the trouble sone
Mot folowe, and chaunge as the mone.
Right so farith Love, that selde in oon
Holdith his anker; for right anoon
Whan they in ese wene best to live,
They been with tempest al fordrive.
Who serveth Love, can telle of wo;
The stoundemele Ioye mot overgo.
Now he hurteth, and now he cureth,
For selde in oo poynt Love endureth.
Now is it right me to procede,
How Shame gan medle and take hede,
Thurgh whom felle angres I have had;
And how the stronge wal was maad,
And the castell of brede and lengthe,
That God of Love wan with his strengthe.
Al this in romance wil I sette,
And for no-thing ne wil I lette,
So that it lyking to hir be,
That is the flour of beaute;
For she may best my labour quyte,
That I for hir love shal endyte.
Wikkid-Tunge, that the covyne
Of every lover can devyne
Worst, and addith more somdel,
(For Wikkid-Tunge seith never wel),
To me-ward bar he right gret hate,
Espying me erly and late,
Til he hath seen the grete chere
Of Bialacoil and me y-fere.
He mighte not his tunge withstonde
Worse to reporte than he fonde,
He was so ful of cursed rage;
It sat him wel of his linage,
For him an Irish womman bar.
His tunge was fyled sharp, and squar,
Poignaunt and right kerving,
And wonder bitter in speking.
For whan that he me gan espye,
He swoor, afferming sikirly,
Bitwene Bialacoil and me
Was yvel aquayntaunce and privee.
He spak therof so folily,
That he awakid Ielousy;
Which, al afrayed in his rysing,
Whan that he herde [him] Iangling,
He ran anoon, as he were wood,
To Bialacoil ther that he stood;
Which hadde lever in this caas
Have been at Reynes or Amyas;
For foot-hoot, in his felonye
To him thus seide Ielousye: —
'Why hast thou been so necligent,
To kepen, whan I was absent,
This verger here left in thy ward?
To me thou haddist no reward,
To truste (to thy confusioun)
Him thus, to whom suspeccioun
I have right greet, for it is nede;
It is wel shewed by the dede.
Greet faute in thee now have I founde;
By god, anoon thou shalt be bounde,
And faste loken in a tour,
Withoute refuyt or socour.
For Shame to long hath be thee fro;
Over sone she was agoo.
Whan thou hast lost bothe drede and fere,
It semed wel she was not here.
She was [not] bisy, in no wyse,
To kepe thee and [to] chastyse,
And for to helpen Chastitee
To kepe the roser, as thinkith me.
For than this boy-knave so boldely
Ne sholde not have be hardy,
[Ne] in this verger had such game,
Which now me turneth to gret shame.'
Bialacoil nist what to sey;
Ful fayn he wolde have fled awey,
For fere han hid, nere that he
Al sodeynly took him with me.

And whan I saugh he hadde so,
This Ielousye, take us two,
I was astoned, and knew no rede,
But fledde awey for verrey drede.
Than Shame cam forth ful simply;
She wende have trespaced ful gretly;
Humble of hir port, and made it simple,
Wering a vayle in stede of wimple,
As nonnis doon in hir abbey.
Bicause hir herte was in affray,
She gan to speke, within a throwe,
To Ielousye, right wonder lowe.
First of his grace she bisought,
And seide: — 'Sire, ne leveth nought
Wikkid-Tunge, that fals espye,
Which is so glad to feyne and lye.
He hath you maad, thurgh flatering,
On Bialacoil a fals lesing.
His falsnesse is not now anew,
It is to long that he him knew.
This is not the firste day;
For Wikkid-Tunge hath custom ay
Yongé folkis to bewreye,
And false lesinges on hem leye.
'Yit nevertheles I see among,
That the loigne it is so longe
Of Bialacoil, hertis to lure,
In Loves servise for to endure,
Drawing suche folk him to,
That he had no-thing with to do;
But in sothnesse I trowe nought,
That Bialacoil hadde ever in thought
To do trespace or vilanye;
But, for his modir Curtesye
Hath taught him ever [for] to be
Good of aqueyntaunce and privee;
For he loveth non hevinesse,
But mirthe and pley, and al gladnesse;
He hateth alle [trecherous],
Soleyn folk and envious;
For [wel] ye witen how that he
Wol ever glad and Ioyful be
Honestly with folk to pley.
I have be negligent, in good fey,
To chastise him; therefore now I
Of herte crye you here mercy,
That I have been so recheles
To tamen him, withouten lees.
Of my foly I me repente;
Now wol I hool sette myn entente
To kepe, bothe [loude] and stille,
Bialacoil to do your wille.'
'Shame, Shame,' seyde Ielousy,
'To be bitrasshed gret drede have I.
Lecherye hath clombe so hye,
That almost blered is myn ye;
No wonder is, if that drede have I.
Over-al regnith Lechery,
Whos might [yit] growith night and day.
Bothe in cloistre and in abbey
Chastite is werreyed over-al.
Therfore I wol with siker wal
Close bothe roses and roser.
I have to longe in this maner
Left hem unclosid wilfully;
Wherfore I am right inwardly
Sorowful and repente me.
But now they shal no lenger be
Unclosid; and yit I drede sore,
I shal repente ferthermore,
For the game goth al amis.
Counsel I [mot take] newe, y-wis.
I have to longe tristed thee,
But now it shal no lenger be;
For he may best, in every cost,
Disceyve, that men tristen most.
I see wel that I am nygh shent,
But-if I sette my ful entent
Remedye to purveye.
Therfore close I shal the weye
Fro hem that wol the rose espye,
And come to wayte me vilanye,
For, in good feith and in trouthe,
I wol not lette, for no slouthe,
To live the more in sikirnesse,
[To] make anoon a forteresse,
[To enclose] the roses of good savour.
In middis shal I make a tour
To putte Bialacoil in prisoun,
For ever I drede me of tresoun.
I trowe I shal kepe him so,
That he shal have no might to go
Aboute to make companye
To hem that thenke of vilanye;
Ne to no such as hath ben here
Aforn, and founde in him good chere,
Which han assailed him to shende,
And with hir trowandyse to blende.
A fool is eyth [for] to bigyle;
But may I lyve a litel while,
He shal forthenke his fair semblaunt.'
And with that word cam Drede avaunt,
Which was abasshed, and in gret fere,
Whan he wiste Ielousye was there.
He was for drede in such affray,
That not a word durste he say,

But quaking stood ful stille aloon,
Til Ielousye his wey was goon,
Save Shame, that him not forsook;
Bothe Drede and she ful sore quook;
[Til] that at laste Drede abreyde,
And to his cosin Shame seyde:
'Shame,' he seide, 'in sothfastnesse,
To me it is gret hevinesse,
That the noyse so fer is go,
And the sclaundre of us two.
But sith that it is [so] bifalle,
We may it not ageyn [do] calle,
Whan onis sprongen is a fame.
For many a yeer withouten blame
We han been, and many a day;
For many an April and many a May
We han [y]-passed, not [a]shamed,
Til Ielousye hath us blamed
Of mistrust and suspecioun
Causeles, withouten enchesoun.
Go we to Daunger hastily,
And late us shewe him openly,
That he hath not aright [y]-wrought,
Whan that he sette nought his thought
To kepe better the purpryse;
In his doing he is not wyse.
He hath to us [y]-do gret wrong,
That hath suffred now so long
Bialacoil to have his wille,
Alle his lustes to fulfille.
He must amende it utterly,
Or ellis shal he vilaynsly
Exyled be out of this londe;
For he the werre may not withstonde
Of Ielousye, nor the greef,
Sith Bialacoil is at mischeef.'
To Daunger, Shame and Drede anoon
The righte wey ben [bothe a]-goon,
The cherl they founden hem aforn
Ligging undir an hawethorn.
Undir his heed no pilowe was,
But in the stede a trusse of gras.
He slombred, and a nappe he took,
Til Shame pitously him shook,
And greet manace on him gan make.
'Why slepist thou whan thou shulde wake?'
Quod Shame; 'thou dost us vilanye!
Who tristith thee, he doth folye,
To kepe roses or botouns,
Whan they ben faire in hir sesouns.
Thou art woxe to familiere
Where thou shulde be straunge of chere,
Stout of thy port, redy to greve.
Thou dost gret foly for to leve
Bialacoil here-in, to calle
The yonder man to shenden us alle.
Though that thou slepe, we may here
Of Ielousie gret noyse here.
Art thou now late? ryse up [in hy],
And stoppe sone and deliverly
Alle the gappis of the hay;
Do no favour, I thee pray.
It fallith no-thing to thy name
Make fair semblaunt, where thou maist blame.
'If Bialacoil be swete and free,
Dogged and fel thou shuldist be;
Froward and outrageous, y-wis;
A cherl chaungeth that curteis is.
This have I herd ofte in seying,
That man [ne] may, for no daunting,
Make a sperhauke of a bosarde.
Alle men wole holde thee for musarde,
That debonair have founden thee;
It sit thee nought curteis to be;
To do men plesaunce or servyse,
In thee it is recreaundyse.
Let thy werkis, fer and nere,
Be lyke thy name, which is Daungere.'
Than, al abawid in shewing,
Anoon spak Dreed, right thus seying,
And seide, 'Daunger, I drede me
That thou ne wolt [not] bisy be
To kepe that thou hast to kepe;
Whan thou shuldist wake, thou art aslepe.
Thou shalt be greved certeynly,
If thee aspye Ielousy,
Or if he finde thee in blame.
He hath to-day assailed Shame,
And chased awey, with gret manace,
Bialacoil out of this place,
And swereth shortly that he shal
Enclose him in a sturdy wal;
And al is for thy wikkednesse,
For that thee faileth straungenesse.
Thyn herte, I trowe, be failed al;
Thou shalt repente in special,
If Ielousye the sothe knewe;
Thou shalt forthenke, and sore rewe.'
With that the cherl his clubbe gan shake,
Frouning his eyen gan to make,
And hidous chere; as man in rage,
For ire he brente in his visage.

Whan that he herde him blamed so,
He seide, 'Out of my wit I go;
To be discomfit I have gret wrong.
Certis, I have now lived to long,
Sith I may not this closer kepe;
Al quik I wolde be dolven depe,
If any man shal more repeire
Into this garden, for foule or faire.
Myn herte for ire goth a-fere,
That I lete any entre here.
I have do foly, now I see,
But now it shal amended bee.
Who settith foot here any more,
Truly, he shal repente it sore;
For no man mo into this place
Of me to entre shal have grace.
Lever I hadde, with swerdis tweyne
Thurgh-out myn herte, in every veyne
Perced to be, with many a wounde,
Than slouthe shulde in me be founde.
From hennesforth, by night or day,
I shal defende it, if I may,
Withouten any excepcioun
Of ech maner condicioun;
And if I any man it graunte,
Holdeth me for recreaunte.'
Than Daunger on his feet gan stonde,
And hente a burdoun in his honde.
Wroth in his ire, ne lefte he nought,
But thurgh the verger he hath sought.
If he might finde hole or trace,
Wher-thurgh that men mot forth-by pace,
Or any gappe, he dide it close,
That no man mighte touche a rose
Of the roser al aboute;
He shitteth every man withoute.
Thus day by day Daunger is wers,
More wondirful and more divers,
And feller eek than ever he was;
For him ful oft I singe 'allas!'
For I ne may nought, thurgh his ire,
Recover that I most desire.
Myn herte, allas, wol brest a-two,
For Bialacoil I wratthed so.
For certeynly, in every membre
I quake, whan I me remembre
Of the botoun, which [that] I wolde
Fulle ofte a day seen and biholde.
And whan I thenke upon the kisse,
And how muche Ioye and blisse
I hadde thurgh the savour swete,
For wante of it I grone and grete.
Me thenkith I fele yit in my nose
The swete savour of the rose.
And now I woot that I mot go
So fer the fresshe floures fro,
To me ful welcome were the deeth;
Absens therof, allas, me sleeth!
For whylom with this rose, allas,
I touched nose, mouth, and face;
But now the deeth I must abyde.
But Love consente, another tyde,
That onis I touche may and kisse,
I trowe my peyne shal never lisse.
Theron is al my coveityse,
Which brent myn herte in many wyse.
Now shal repaire agayn sighinge,
Long wacche on nightis, and no slepinge;
Thought in wisshing, torment, and wo,
With many a turning to and fro,
That half my peyne I can not telle.
For I am fallen into helle
From paradys and welthe, the more
My turment greveth; more and more
Anoyeth now the bittirnesse,
That I toforn have felt swetnesse.
And Wikkid-Tunge, thurgh his falshede,
Causeth al my wo and drede.
On me he leyeth a pitous charge,
Bicause his tunge was to large.
Now it is tyme, shortly that I
Telle you som-thing of Ielousy,
That was in gret suspecioun.
Aboute him lefte he no masoun,
That stoon coude leye, ne querrour;
He hired hem to make a tour.
And first, the roses for to kepe,
Aboute hem made he a diche depe,
Right wondir large, and also brood;
Upon the whiche also stood
Of squared stoon a sturdy wal,
Which on a cragge was founded al,
And right gret thikkenesse eek it bar.
Abouten, it was founded squar,
An hundred fadome on every syde,
It was al liche longe and wyde.
Lest any tyme it were assayled,
Ful wel aboute it was batayled;
And rounde environ eek were set
Ful many a riche and fair touret.
At every corner of this wal
Was set a tour ful principal;
And everich hadde, withoute fable,
A porte-colys defensable
To kepe of enemies, and to greve,

That there hir force wolde preve.
And eek amidde this purpryse
Was maad a tour of gret maistryse;
A fairer saugh no man with sight,
Large and wyde, and of gret might.
They [ne] dredde noon assaut
Of ginne, gunne, nor skaffaut.
[For] the temprure of the mortere
Was maad of licour wonder dere;
Of quikke lyme persant and egre,
The which was tempred with vinegre.
The stoon was hard [as] ademant,
Wherof they made the foundement.
The tour was rounde, maad in compas;
In al this world no richer was,
Ne better ordeigned therwithal.
Aboute the tour was maad a wal,
So that, bitwixt that and the tour,
Rosers were set of swete savour,
With many roses that they bere.
And eek within the castel were
Springoldes, gunnes, bows, archers;
And eek above, atte corners,
Men seyn over the walle stonde
Grete engynes, [whiche] were nigh honde;
And in the kernels, here and there,
Of arblasters gret plentee were.
Noon armure might hir stroke withstonde,
It were foly to prece to honde.
Without the diche were listes made,
With walles batayled large and brade,
For men and hors shulde not atteyne
To neigh the diche over the pleyne.
Thus Ielousye hath enviroun
Set aboute his garnisoun
With walles rounde, and diche depe,
Only the roser for to kepe.
And Daunger [eek], erly and late
The keyes kepte of the utter gate,
The which openeth toward the eest.
And he hadde with him atte leest
Thritty servauntes, echon by name.
That other gate kepte Shame,
Which openede, as it was couth,
Toward the parte of the south.
Sergeauntes assigned were hir to
Ful many, hir wille for to do.
Than Drede hadde in hir baillye
The keping of the conestablerye,
Toward the north, I undirstonde,
That opened upon the left honde,
The which for no-thing may be sure,
But-if she do [hir] bisy cure
Erly on morowe and also late,
Strongly to shette and barre the gate.
Of every thing that she may see
Drede is aferd, wher-so she be;
For with a puff of litel winde
Drede is astonied in hir minde.
Therfore, for stelinge of the rose,
I rede hir nought the yate unclose.
A foulis flight wol make hir flee,
And eek a shadowe, if she it see.
Thanne Wikked-Tunge, ful of envye,
With soudiours of Normandye,
As he that causeth al the bate,
Was keper of the fourthe gate,
And also to the tother three
He went ful ofte, for to see.
Whan his lot was to wake a-night,
His instrumentis wolde he dight,
For to blowe and make soun,
Ofter than he hath enchesoun;
And walken oft upon the wal,
Corners and wikettis over-al
Ful narwe serchen and espye;
Though he nought fond, yit wolde he lye.
Discordaunt ever fro armonye,
And distoned from melodye,
Controve he wolde, and foule fayle,
With hornpypes of Cornewayle.
In floytes made he discordaunce,
And in his musik, with mischaunce,
He wolde seyn, with notes newe,
That he [ne] fond no womman trewe,
Ne that he saugh never, in his lyf,
Unto hir husbonde a trewe wyf;
Ne noon so ful of honestee,
That she nil laughe and mery be
Whan that she hereth, or may espye,
A man speken of lecherye.
Everich of hem hath somme vyce;
Oon is dishonest, another is nyce;
If oon be ful of vilanye,
Another hath a likerous ye;
If oon be ful of wantonesse,
Another is a chideresse.
Thus Wikked-Tunge (god yeve him shame!)
Can putte hem everichone in blame
Withoute desert and causeles;
He lyeth, though they been giltles.
I have pite to seen the sorwe,
That waketh bothe eve and morwe,

To innocents doth such grevaunce;
I pray god yeve him evel chaunce,
That he ever so bisy is
Of any womman to seyn amis!
Eek Ielousye god confounde,
That hath [y]-maad a tour so rounde,
And made aboute a garisoun
To sette Bialacoil in prisoun;
The which is shet there in the tour,
Ful longe to holde there soiour,
There for to liven in penaunce.
And for to do him more grevaunce,
[Ther] hath ordeyned Ielousye
An olde vekke, for to espye
The maner of his governaunce;
The whiche devel, in hir enfaunce,
Had lerned [muche] of Loves art,
And of his pleyes took hir part;
She was [expert] in his servyse.
She knew ech wrenche and every gyse
Of love, and every [loveres] wyle,
It was [the] harder hir to gyle.
Of Bialacoil she took ay hede,
That ever he liveth in wo and drede.
He kepte him coy and eek privee,
Lest in him she hadde see
Any foly countenaunce,
For she knew al the olde daunce.
And aftir this, whan Ielousye
Had Bialacoil in his baillye,
And shette him up that was so free,
For seure of him he wolde be,
He trusteth sore in his castel;
The stronge werk him lyketh wel.
He dradde nat that no glotouns
Shulde stele his roses or botouns.
The roses weren assured alle,
Defenced with the stronge walle.
Now Ielousye ful wel may be
Of drede devoid, in libertee,
Whether that he slepe or wake;
For of his roses may noon be take.
But I, allas, now morne shal;
Bicause I was without the wal,
Ful moche dole and mone I made.
Who hadde wist what wo I hadde,
I trowe he wolde have had pitee.
Love to deere had sold to me
The good that of his love hadde I.
I [wende a bought] it al queyntly;
But now, thurgh doubling of my peyn,
I see he wolde it selle ageyn,
And me a newe bargeyn lere,
The which al-out the more is dere,
For the solace that I have lorn,
Than I hadde it never aforn.
Certayn I am ful lyk, indeed,
To him that cast in erthe his seed;
And hath Ioie of the newe spring,
Whan it greneth in the ginning,
And is also fair and fresh of flour,
Lusty to seen, swote of odour;
But er he it in sheves shere,
May falle a weder that shal it dere,
And maken it to fade and falle,
The stalk, the greyn, and floures alle;
That to the tilier is fordone
The hope that he hadde to sone.
I drede, certeyn, that so fare I;
For hope and travaile sikerly
Ben me biraft al with a storm;
The floure nil seden of my corn.
For Love hath so avaunced me,
Whan I bigan my privitee
To Bialacoil al for to telle,
Whom I ne fond froward ne felle,
But took a-gree al hool my play.
But Love is of so hard assay,
That al at onis he reved me,
Whan I wend best aboven have be.
It is of Love, as of Fortune,
That chaungeth ofte, and nil contune;
Which whylom wol on folke smyle,
And gloumbe on hem another whyle;
Now freend, now foo, [thou] shalt hir fele,
For [in] a twinkling tourneth hir wheel.
She can wrythe hir heed awey,
This is the concours of hir pley;
She can areyse that doth morne,
And whirle adown, and overturne
Who sittith heighst, [al] as hir list;
A fool is he that wol hir trist.
For it [am] I that am com doun
Thurgh change and revolucioun!
Sith Bialacoil mot fro me twinne,
Shet in the prisoun yond withinne,
His absence at myn herte I fele;
For al my Ioye and al myn hele
Was in him and in the rose,
That but yon [wal], which him doth close,
Open, that I may him see,
Love nil not that I cured be
Of the peynes that I endure,
Nor of my cruel aventure.

A, Bialacoil, myn owne dere!
Though thou be now a prisonere,
Kepe atte leste thyn herte to me,
And suffre not that it daunted be;
Ne lat not Ielousye, in his rage,
Putten thyn herte in no servage.
Although he chastice thee withoute,
And make thy body unto him loute,
Have herte as hard as dyamaunt,
Stedefast, and nought pliaunt;
In prisoun though thy body be,
At large kepe thyn herte free.
A trewe herte wol not plye
For no manace that it may drye.
If Ielousye doth thee payne,
Quyte him his whyle thus agayne,
To venge thee, atte leest in thought,
If other way thou mayest nought;
And in this wyse sotilly
Worche, and winne the maistry.
But yit I am in gret affray
Lest thou do not as I say;
I drede thou canst me greet maugree,
That thou emprisoned art for me;
But that [is] not for my trespas,
For thurgh me never discovered was
Yit thing that oughte be secree.
Wel more anoy [ther] is in me,
Than is in thee, of this mischaunce;
For I endure more hard penaunce
Than any [man] can seyn or thinke,
That for the sorwe almost I sinke.
Whan I remembre me of my wo,
Ful nygh out of my wit I go.
Inward myn herte I fele blede,
For comfortles the deeth I drede.
Ow I not wel to have distresse,
Whan false, thurgh hir wikkednesse,
And traitours, that arn envyous,
To noyen me be so coragious?
A, Bialacoil! ful wel I see,
That they hem shape to disceyve thee,
To make thee buxom to hir lawe,
And with hir corde thee to drawe
Wher-so hem lust, right at hir wil;
I drede they have thee brought thertil.
Withoute comfort, thought me sleeth;
This game wol bringe me to my deeth.
For if your gode wille I lese,
I mote be deed; I may not chese.
And if that thou foryete me,
Myn herte shal never in lyking be;
Nor elles-where finde solace,
If I be put out of your grace,
As it shal never been, I hope;
Than shulde I fallen in wanhope.

[*Here, at* l. 4070 *of the* French text, *ends the work of* G. de Lorris; *and begins the work of* Jean de Meum.]

Allas, in wanhope? —nay, pardee!
For I wol never dispeired be.
If Hope me faile, than am I
Ungracious and unworthy;
In Hope I wol comforted be,
For Love, whan he bitaught hir me,
Seide, that Hope, wher-so I go,
Shulde ay be relees to my wo.
But what and she my balis bete,
And be to me curteis and swete?
She is in no-thing ful certeyn.
Lovers she put in ful gret peyn,
And makith hem with wo to dele.
Hir fair biheest disceyveth fele,
For she wol bihote, sikirly,
And failen aftir outrely.
A! that is a ful noyous thing!
For many a lover, in loving,
Hangeth upon hir, and trusteth fast,
Whiche lese hir travel at the last.
Of thing to comen she woot right nought;
Therfore, if it be wysly sought,
Hir counseille, foly is to take.
For many tymes, whan she wol make
A ful good silogisme, I drede
That aftirward ther shal in dede
Folwe an evel conclusioun;
This put me in confusioun.
For many tymes I have it seen,
That many have bigyled been,
For trust that they have set in Hope,
Which fel hem aftirward a-slope.
But natheles yit, gladly she wolde,
That he, that wol him with hir holde,
Hadde alle tymes [his] purpos clere,
Withoute deceyte, or any were.
That she desireth sikirly;
Whan I hir blamed, I did foly.
But what avayleth hir good wille,
Whan she ne may staunche my stounde ille?
That helpith litel, that she may do,
Outake biheest unto my wo.
And heeste certeyn, in no wyse,
Withoute yift, is not to pryse.

Whan heest and deed a-sundir varie,
They doon [me have] a gret contrarie.
Thus am I possed up and doun
With dool, thought, and confusioun;
Of my disese ther is no noumbre.
Daunger and Shame me encumbre,
Drede also, and Ielousye,
And Wikked-Tunge, ful of envye,
Of whiche the sharpe and cruel ire
Ful oft me put in gret martire.
They han my Ioye fully let,
Sith Bialacoil they have bishet
Fro me in prisoun wikkidly,
Whom I love so entierly,
That it wol my bane be,
But I the soner may him see.
And yit moreover, wurst of alle,
Ther is set to kepe, foule hir bifalle!
A rimpled vekke, fer ronne in age,
Frowning and yelowe in hir visage,
Which in awayte lyth day and night,
That noon of hem may have a sight.
Now moot my sorwe enforced be;
Ful soth it is, that Love yaf me
Three wonder yiftes of his grace,
Which I have lorn now in this place,
Sith they ne may, withoute drede,
Helpen but litel, who taketh hede.
For here availeth no Swete-Thought,
And Swete-Speche helpith right nought.
The thridde was called Swete-Loking,
That now is lorn, without lesing.
[The] yiftes were fair, but not forthy
They helpe me but simply,
But Bialacoil [may] loosed be,
To gon at large and to be free.
For him my lyf lyth al in dout,
But-if he come the rather out.
Allas! I trowe it wol not been!
For how shuld I evermore him seen?
He may not out, and that is wrong,
Bicause the tour is so strong.
How shulde he out? by whos prowesse,
Out of so strong a forteresse?
By me, certeyn, it nil be do;
God woot, I have no wit therto!
But wel I woot I was in rage,
Whan I to Love dide homage.
Who was in cause, in sothfastnesse,
But hir-silf, dame Idelnesse,
Which me conveyed, thurgh fair prayere,
To entre into that fair vergere?
She was to blame me to leve,
The which now doth me sore greve.
A foolis word is nought to trowe,
Ne worth an appel for to lowe;
Men shulde him snibbe bittirly,
At pryme temps of his foly.
I was a fool, and she me leved,
Thurgh whom I am right nought releved.
She accomplisshed al my wil,
That now me greveth wondir il.
Resoun me seide what shulde falle.
A fool my-silf I may wel calle,
That love asyde I had not leyde,
And trowed that dame Resoun seyde.
Resoun had bothe skile and right,
Whan she me blamed, with al hir might,
To medle of love, that hath me shent;
But certeyn now I wol repent.
'And shulde I repent? Nay parde!
A fals traitour than shulde I be.
The develles engins wolde me take,
If I my [lorde] wolde forsake,
Or Bialacoil falsly bitraye.
Shulde I at mischeef hate him? nay,
Sith he now, for his curtesye,
Is in prisoun of Ielousye.
Curtesye certeyn dide he me,
So muche, it may not yolden be,
Whan he the hay passen me lete,
To kisse the rose, faire and swete;
Shulde I therfore cunne him maugree?
Nay, certeynly, it shal not be;
For Love shal never, [if god wil],
Here of me, thurgh word or wil,
Offence or complaynt, more or lesse,
Neither of Hope nor Idilnesse;
For certis, it were wrong that I
Hated hem for hir curtesye.
Ther is not ellis, but suffre and thinke,
And waken whan I shulde winke;
Abyde in hope, til Love, thurgh chaunce,
Sende me socour or allegeaunce,
Expectant ay til I may mete
To geten mercy of that swete.
'Whylom I thinke how Love to me
Seyde he wolde taken atte gree
My servise, if unpacience
Caused me to doon offence.
He seyde, "In thank I shal it take,
And high maister eek thee make,
If wikkednesse ne reve it thee;
But sone, I trowe, that shal not be."
These were his wordis by and by;
It semed he loved me trewly.

Now is ther not but serve him wele,
If that I thinke his thank to fele.
My good, myn harm, lyth hool in me;
In Love may no defaute be;
For trewe Love ne failid never man.
Sothly, the faute mot nedis than
(As God forbede!) be founde in me,
And how it cometh, I can not see.
Now lat it goon as it may go;
Whether Love wol socoure me or slo,
He may do hool on me his wil.
I am so sore bounde him til,
From his servyse I may not fleen;
For lyf and deth, withouten wene,
Is in his hand; I may not chese;
He may me do bothe winne and lese.
And sith so sore he doth me greve,
Yit, if my lust he wolde acheve
To Bialacoil goodly to be,
I yeve no force what felle on me.
For though I dye, as I mot nede,
I praye Love, of his goodlihede,
To Bialacoil do gentilnesse,
For whom I live in such distresse,
That I mote deyen for penaunce.
But first, withoute repentaunce,
I wol me confesse in good entent,
And make in haste my testament,
As lovers doon that felen smerte: —
To Bialacoil leve I myn herte
Al hool, withoute departing,
Or doublenesse of repenting.'

COMENT RAISOUN VIENT A L'AMANT.

Thus as I made my passage
In compleynt, and in cruel rage,
And I not wher to finde a leche
That couthe unto myn helping eche,
Sodeynly agayn comen doun
Out of hir tour I saugh Resoun,
Discrete and wys, and ful plesaunt,
And of hir porte ful avenaunt.
The righte wey she took to me,
Which stood in greet perplexite,
That was posshed in every side,
That I nist where I might abyde,
Til she, demurely sad of chere,
Seide to me as she com nere: —
'Myn owne freend, art thou yit greved?
How is this quarel yit acheved
Of Loves syde? Anoon me telle;
Hast thou not yit of love thy fille?
Art thou not wery of thy servyse
That thee hath [pyned] in sich wyse?
What Ioye hast thou in thy loving?
Is it swete or bitter thing?
Canst thou yit chese, lat me see,
What best thy socour mighte be?
'Thou servest a ful noble lord,
That maketh thee thral for thy reward,
Which ay renewith thy turment,
With foly so he hath thee blent.
Thou felle in mischeef thilke day,
Whan thou didest, the sothe to say,
Obeysaunce and eek homage;
Thou wroughtest no-thing as the sage.
Whan thou bicam his liege man,
Thou didist a gret foly than;
Thou wistest not what fel therto,
With what lord thou haddist to do.
If thou haddist him wel knowe,
Thou haddist nought be brought so lowe;
For if thou wistest what it were,
Thou noldist serve him half a yeer,
Not a weke, nor half a day,
Ne yit an hour withoute delay,
Ne never [han] loved paramours,
His lordship is so ful of shoures.
Knowest him ought?'
L'Amaunt. 'Ye, dame, parde!'
Raisoun. 'Nay, nay.'
L'Amaunt. 'Yes, I.'
Raisoun. 'Whereof, lat see?'
L'Amaunt. 'Of that he seyde I shulde be
Glad to have sich lord as he,
And maister of sich seignory.'
Raisoun. 'Knowist him no more?'
L'Amaunt. 'Nay, certis, I,
Save that he yaf me rewles there,
And wente his wey, I niste where,
And I abood bounde in balaunce.'
Raisoun. 'Lo, there a noble conisaunce!
But I wil that thou knowe him now
Ginning and ende, sith that thou
Art so anguisshous and mate,
Disfigured out of astate;
Ther may no wrecche have more of wo,
Ne caitif noon enduren so.
It were to every man sitting
Of his lord have knowleching.
For if thou knewe him, out of dout,
Lightly thou shulde escapen out

Of the prisoun that marreth thee.'
L'Amaunt. 'Ye, dame! sith my lord is he,
And I his man, maad with myn honde,
I wolde right fayn undirstonde
To knowen of what kinde he be,
If any wolde enforme me.'
Raisoun. 'I wolde,' seid Resoun, 'thee lere,
Sith thou to lerne hast sich desire,
And shewe thee, withouten fable,
A thing that is not demonstrable.
Thou shalt [here lerne] without science,
And knowe, withoute experience,
The thing that may not knowen be,
Ne wist ne shewid in no degree.
Thou mayst the sothe of it not witen,
Though in thee it were writen.
Thou shalt not knowe therof more
Whyle thou art reuled by his lore;
But unto him that love wol flee,
The knotte may unclosed be,
Which hath to thee, as it is founde,
So long be knet and not unbounde.
Now sette wel thyn entencioun,
To here of love discripcioun.
'Love, it is an hateful pees,
A free acquitaunce, without relees,
[A trouthe], fret full of falshede,
A sikernesse, al set in drede;
In herte is a dispeiring hope,
And fulle of hope, it is wanhope;
Wyse woodnesse, and wood resoun,
A swete peril, in to droune,
An hevy birthen, light to bere,
A wikked wawe awey to were.
It is Caribdis perilous,
Disagreable and gracious.
It is discordaunce that can accorde,
And accordaunce to discorde.
It is cunning withoute science,
Wisdom withoute sapience,
Wit withoute discrecioun,
Havoir, withoute possessioun.
It is sike hele and hool siknesse,
A thrust drowned [in] dronkenesse,
An helthe ful of maladye,
And charitee ful of envye,
An [hunger] ful of habundaunce,
And a gredy suffisaunce;
Delyt right ful of hevinesse,
And drerihed ful of gladnesse;
Bitter swetnesse and swete errour,
Right evel savoured good savour;
Sinne that pardoun hath withinne,
And pardoun spotted without [with] sinne;
A peyne also it is, Ioyous,
And felonye right pitous;
Also pley that selde is stable,
And stedefast [stat], right mevable;
A strengthe, weyked to stonde upright,
And feblenesse, ful of might;
Wit unavysed, sage folye,
And Ioye ful of turmentrye;
A laughter it is, weping ay,
Rest, that traveyleth night and day;
Also a swete helle it is,
And a sorowful Paradys;
A plesaunt gayl and esy prisoun,
And, ful of froste, somer sesoun;
Pryme temps, ful of frostes whyte,
And May, devoide of al delyte,
With seer braunches, blossoms ungrene;
And newe fruyt, filiid with winter tene.
It is a slowe, may not forbere
Ragges, ribaned with gold, to were;
For al-so wel wol love be set
Under ragges as riche rochet;
And eek as wel be amourettes
In mourning blak, as bright burnettes.
For noon is of so mochel prys,
Ne no man founden [is] so wys,
Ne noon so high is of parage,
Ne no man founde of wit so sage,
No man so hardy ne so wight,
Ne no man of so mochel might,
Noon so fulfilled of bounte,
[But] he with love may daunted be.
Al the world holdith this way;
Love makith alle to goon miswey,
But it be they of yvel lyf,
Whom Genius cursith, man and wyf,
That wrongly werke ageyn nature.
Noon suche I love, ne have no cure
Of suche as Loves servaunts been,
And wol not by my counsel fleen.
For I ne preyse that loving,
Wher-thurgh man, at the laste ending,
Shal calle hem wrecchis fulle of wo,
Love greveth hem and shendith so.
But if thou wolt wel Love eschewe,
For to escape out of his mewe,
And make al hool thy sorwe to slake,
No bettir counsel mayst thou take,
Than thinke to fleen wel, y-wis;

May nought helpe elles; for wite thou this: —
If thou flee it, it shal flee thee;
Folowe it, and folowen shal it thee.'
L'Amaunt. Whan I hadde herd al Resoun seyn,
Which hadde spilt hir speche in veyn:
'Dame,' seyde I, 'I dar wel sey
Of this avaunt me wel I may
That from your scole so deviaunt
I am, that never the more avaunt
Right nought am I, thurgh your doctryne;
I dulle under your disciplyne;
I wot no more than [I] wist [er],
To me so contrarie and so fer
Is every thing that ye me lere;
And yit I can it al parcuere.
Myn herte foryetith therof right nought,
It is so writen in my thought;
And depe graven it is so tendir
That al by herte I can it rendre,
And rede it over comunely;
But to my-silf lewedist am I.
'But sith ye love discreven so,
And lakke and preise it, bothe two,
Defyneth it into this letter,
That I may thenke on it the better;
For I herde never [diffyne it ere],
And wilfully I wolde it lere.'
Raisoun. 'If love be serched wel and sought,
It is a sykenesse of the thought
Annexed and knet bitwixe tweyne,
[Which] male and female, with oo cheyne,
So frely byndith, that they nil twinne,
Whether so therof they lese or winne.
The roote springith, thurgh hoot brenning,
Into disordinat desiring
For to kissen and enbrace,
And at her lust them to solace.
Of other thing love recchith nought,
But setteth hir herte and al hir thought
More for delectacioun
Than any procreacioun
Of other fruyt by engendring;
Which love to god is not plesing;
For of hir body fruyt to get
They yeve no force, they are so set
Upon delyt, to pley in-fere.
And somme have also this manere,
To feynen hem for love seke;
Sich love I preise not at a leke.
For paramours they do but feyne;
To love truly they disdeyne.
They falsen ladies traitoursly,
And sweren hem othes utterly,
With many a lesing, and many a fable,
And al they finden deceyvable.
And, whan they her lust han geten,
The hoote ernes they al foryeten.
Wimmen, the harm they byen ful sore;
But men this thenken evermore,
That lasse harm is, so mote I thee,
Disceyve them, than disceyved be;
And namely, wher they ne may
Finde non other mene wey.
For I wot wel, in sothfastnesse,
That [who] doth now his bisynesse
With any womman for to dele,
For any lust that he may fele,
But-if it be for engendrure,
He doth trespasse, I you ensure.
For he shulde setten al his wil
To geten a likly thing him til,
And to sustene[n], if he might,
And kepe forth, by kindes right,
His owne lyknesse and semblable,
For bicause al is corumpable,
And faile shulde successioun,
Ne were ther generacioun
Our sectis strene for to save.
Whan fader or moder arn in grave,
Hir children shulde, whan they ben deede,
Ful diligent ben, in hir steede,
To use that werke on such a wyse,
That oon may thurgh another ryse.
Therfore set Kinde therin delyt,
For men therin shulde hem delyte,
And of that dede be not erke,
But ofte sythes haunt that werke.
For noon wolde drawe therof a draught
Ne were delyt, which hath him caught.
This hadde sotil dame Nature;
For noon goth right, I thee ensure,
Ne hath entent hool ne parfyt;
For hir desir is for delyt,
The which fortened crece and eke
The pley of love for-ofte seke,
And thralle hem-silf, they be so nyce,
Unto the prince of every vyce.
For of ech sinne it is the rote,
Unlefulle lust, though it be sote,

And of al yvel the racyne,
As Tullius can determyne,
Which in his tyme was ful sage,
In a boke he made of Age,
Wher that more he preyseth Elde,
Though he be croked and unwelde,
And more of commendacioun,
Than Youthe in his discripcioun.
For Youthe set bothe man and wyf
In al perel of soule and lyf;
And perel is, but men have grace,
The [tyme] of youthe for to pace,
Withoute any deth or distresse,
It is so ful of wildenesse;
So ofte it doth shame or damage
To him or to his linage.
It ledith man now up, now doun,
In mochel dissolucioun,
And makith him love yvel company,
And lede his lyf disrewlily,
And halt him payed with noon estate.
Within him-silf is such debate,
He chaungith purpos and entent,
And yalt [him] into som covent,
To liven aftir her empryse,
And lesith fredom and fraunchyse,
That Nature in him hadde set,
The which ageyn he may not get,
If he there make his mansioun
For to abyde professioun.
Through for a tyme his herte absente,
It may not fayle, he shal repente,
And eke abyde thilke day
To leve his abit, and goon his way,
And lesith his worship and his name,
And dar not come ageyn for shame;
But al his lyf he doth so mourne,
Bicause he dar not hoom retourne.
Fredom of kinde so lost hath he
That never may recured be,
But-if that god him graunte grace
That he may, er he hennes pace,
Conteyne undir obedience
Thurgh the vertu of pacience.
For Youthe set man in al folye,
In unthrift and in ribaudye,
In leccherye, and in outrage,
So ofte it chaungith of corage.
Youthe ginneth ofte sich bargeyn,
That may not ende withouten peyn.
In gret perel is set youth-hede,
Delyt so doth his bridil lede.
Delyt thus hangith, drede thee nought,
Bothe mannis body and his thought,
Only thurgh Youthe, his chamberere,
That to don yvel is customere,
And of nought elles taketh hede
But only folkes for to lede
Into disporte and wildenesse,
So is [she] froward from sadnesse.
'But Elde drawith hem therfro;
Who wot it nought, he may wel go
[Demand] of hem that now arn olde,
That whylom Youthe hadde in holde,
Which yit remembre of tendir age,
How it hem brought in many a rage,
And many a foly therin wrought.
But now that Elde hath hem thurgh-sought,
They repente hem of her folye,
That Youthe hem putte in Iupardye,
In perel and in muche wo,
And made hem ofte amis to do,
And suen yvel companye,
Riot and avouterye.
'But Elde [can] ageyn restreyne
From suche foly, and refreyne,
And set men, by hir ordinaunce,
In good reule and in governaunce.
But yvel she spendith hir servyse,
For no man wol hir love, ne pryse;
She is hated, this wot I wele.
Hir acqueyntaunce wolde no man fele,
Ne han of Elde companye,
Men hate to be of hir alye.
For no man wolde bicomen olde,
Ne dye, whan he is yong and bolde.
And Elde merveilith right gretly,
When they remembre hem inwardly
Of many a perelous empryse,
Whiche that they wrought in sondry wyse,
How ever they might, withoute blame,
Escape awey withoute shame,
In youthe, withoute[n] damage
Or repreef of her linage,
Losse of membre, sheding of blode,
Perel of deth, or losse of good.
'Wost thou nought where Youthe abit,
That men so preisen in her wit?
With Delyt she halt soiour,
For bothe they dwellen in oo tour.
As longe as Youthe is in sesoun,
They dwellen in oon mansioun.
Delyt of Youthe wol have servyse
To do what so he wol devyse;

And Youthe is redy evermore
For to obey, for smerte of sore,
Unto Delyt, and him to yive
Hir servise, whyl that she may live.
'Where Elde abit, I wol thee telle
Shortly, and no whyle dwelle,
For thider bihoveth thee to go.
If Deth in youthe thee not slo,
Of this journey thou maist not faile.
With hir Labour and Travaile
Logged been, with Sorwe and Wo,
That never out of hir courte go.
Peyne and Distresse, Syknesse and Ire,
And Malencoly, that angry sire,
Ben of hir paleys senatours;
Groning and Grucching, hir herbergeours,
The day and night, hir to turment,
With cruel Deth they hir present,
And tellen hir, erliche and late,
That Deth stant armed at hir gate.
Than bringe they to hir remembraunce
The foly dedis of hir infaunce,
Which causen hir to mourne in wo
That Youthe hath hir bigiled so,
Which sodeynly awey is hasted.
She wepeth the tyme that she hath wasted,
Compleyning of the preterit,
And the present, that not abit,
And of hir olde vanitee,
That, but aforn hir she may see
In the future som socour,
To leggen hir of hir dolour,
To graunt hir tyme of repentaunce,
For hir sinnes to do penaunce,
And at the laste so hir governe
To winne the Ioy that is eterne,
Fro which go bakward Youthe [hir] made,
In vanitee to droune and wade.
For present tyme abidith nought,
It is more swift than any thought;
So litel whyle it doth endure
That ther nis compte ne mesure.
'But how that ever the game go,
Who list [have] Ioye and mirth also
Of love, be it he or she,
High or lowe, who[so] it be,
In fruyt they shulde hem delyte;
Her part they may not elles quyte,
To save hem-silf in honestee.
And yit ful many oon I see
Of wimmen, sothly for to seyne,
That [ay] desire and wolde fayne
The pley of love, they be so wilde,
And not coveite to go with childe.
And if with child they be perchaunce,
They wole it holde a gret mischaunce;
But what-som-ever wo they fele,
They wol not pleyne, but concele;
But-if it be any fool or nyce,
In whom that shame hath no Iustyce.
For to delyt echon they drawe,
That haunte this werk, bothe high and lawe,
Save sich that ar[e]n worth right nought,
That for money wol be bought.
Such love I preise in no wyse,
Whan it is given for coveitise.
I preise no womman, though [she] be wood,
That yeveth hir-silf for any good.
For litel shulde a man telle
Of hir, that wol hir body selle,
Be she mayde, be she wyf,
That quik wol selle hir, by hir lyf.
How faire chere that ever she make,
He is a wrecche, I undirtake,
That loveth such one, for swete or sour,
Though she him calle hir paramour,
And laugheth on him, and makith him feeste.
For certeynly no suche [a] beeste
To be loved is not worthy,
Or bere the name of druery,
Noon shulde hir please, but he were wood,
That wol dispoile him of his good.
Yit nevertheles, I wol not sey
[But] she, for solace and for pley,
May a Iewel or other thing
Take of her loves free yeving;
But that she aske it in no wyse,
For drede of shame of coveityse.
And she of hirs may him, certeyn,
Withoute sclaundre, yeven ageyn,
And ioyne her hertes togidre so
In love, and take and yeve also.
Trowe not that I wolde hem twinne,
Whan in her love ther is no sinne;
I wol that they togedre go,
And doon al that they han ado,
As curteis shulde and debonaire,
And in her love beren hem faire,
Withoute vyce, bothe he and she;

So that alwey, in honestee,
Fro foly love [they] kepe hem clere
That brenneth hertis with his fere;
And that her love, in any wyse,
Be devoid of coveityse.
Good love shulde engendrid be
Of trewe herte, iust, and secree,
And not of such as sette her thought
To have her lust, and ellis nought,
So are they caught in Loves lace,
Truly, for bodily solace.
Fleshly delyt is so present
With thee, that sette al thyn entent,
Withoute more (what shulde I glose?)
For to gete and have the Rose;
Which makith thee so mate and wood
That thou desirest noon other good.
But thou art not an inche the nerre,
But ever abydest in sorwe and werre,
As in thy face it is sene;
It makith thee bothe pale and lene;
Thy might, thy vertu goth way.
A sory gest, in goode fay,
Thou [herberedest than] in thyn inne,
The God of Love whan thou let inne!
Wherefore I rede, thou shette him out,
Or he shal greve thee, out of doute;
For to thy profit it wol turne,
If he nomore with thee soiourne.
In gret mischeef and sorwe sonken
Ben hertis, that of love arn dronken,
As thou peraventure knowen shal,
Whan thou hast lost [thy] tyme al,
And spent [thy youthe] in ydilnesse,
In waste, and woful lustinesse;
If thou maist live the tyme to see
Of love for to delivered be,
Thy tyme thou shalt biwepe sore
The whiche never thou maist restore.
(For tyme lost, as men may see,
For no-thing may recured be).
And if thou scape yit, atte laste,
Fro Love, that hath thee so faste
Knit and bounden in his lace,
Certeyn, I holde it but a grace.
For many oon, as it is seyn,
Have lost, and spent also in veyn,
In his servyse, withoute socour,
Body and soule, good, and tresour,
Wit, and strengthe, and eek riches,
Of which they hadde never redresse.
Thus taught and preched hath Resoun,
But Love spilte hir sermoun,
That was so imped in my thought,
That hir doctrine I sette at nought.
And yit ne seide she never a dele,
That I ne understode it wele,
Word by word, the mater al.
But unto Love I was so thral,
Which callith over-al his pray,
He chasith so my thought [alway],
And holdith myn herte undir his sele,
As trust and trew as any stele;
So that no devocioun
Ne hadde I in the sermoun
Of dame Resoun, ne of hir rede;
It toke no soiour in myn hede.
For alle yede out at oon ere
That in that other she dide lere;
Fully on me she lost hir lore,
Hir speche me greved wondir sore.
[Than] unto hir for ire I seide,
For anger, as I dide abraide:
'Dame, and is it your wille algate,
That I not love, but that I hate
Alle men, as ye me teche?
For if I do aftir your speche,
Sith that ye seyn love is not good,
Than must I nedis say with mood,
If I it leve, in hatrede ay
Liven, and voide love away
From me, [and been] a sinful wrecche,
Hated of all that [love that] tecche.
I may not go noon other gate,
For either must I love or hate.
And if I hate men of-newe
More than love, it wol me rewe,
As by your preching semeth me,
For Love no-thing ne preisith thee.
Ye yeve good counseil, sikirly,
That prechith me al-day, that I
Shulde not Loves lore alowe;
He were a fool, wolde you not trowe!
In speche also ye han me taught
Another love, that knowen is naught,
Which I have herd you not repreve,
To love ech other; by your leve,
If ye wolde diffyne it me,
I wolde gladly here, to see,
At the leest, if I may lere
Of sondry loves the manere.'
Raison. 'Certis, freend, a fool art thou
Whan that thou no-thing wolt allowe
That I [thee] for thy profit say.
Yit wol I sey thee more, in fay;
For I am redy, at the leste,

To accomplisshe thy requeste,
But I not wher it wol avayle;
In veyne, peraunte, I shal travayle.
Love ther is in sondry wyse,
As I shal thee here devyse.
For som love leful is and good;
I mene not that which makith thee wood,
And bringith thee in many a fit,
And ravisshith fro thee al thy wit,
It is so merveilous and queynt;
With such love be no more aqueynt.

COMMENT RAISOUN DIFFINIST AMISTIE.

'Love of Frendshipe also ther is,
Which makith no man doon amis,
Of wille knit bitwixe two,
That wol not breke for wele ne wo;
Which long is lykly to contune,
Whan wille and goodis ben in comune;
Grounded by goddis ordinaunce,
Hool, withoute discordaunce;
With hem holding comuntee
Of al her goode in charitee,
That ther be noon excepcioun
Thurgh chaunging of entencioun;
That ech helpe other at hir neede,
And wysly hele bothe word and dede;
Trewe of mening, devoid of slouthe,
For wit is nought withoute trouthe;
So that the ton dar al his thought
Seyn to his freend, and spare nought,
As to him-silf, without dreding
To be discovered by wreying.
For glad is that coniuncciouu,
Whan ther is noon suspecioun
[Ne lak in hem], whom they wolde prove
That trew and parfit weren in love.
For no man may be amiable,
But-if he be so ferme and stable,
That fortune chaunge him not ne blinde,
But that his freend alwey him finde,
Bothe pore and riche, in oon [e]state.
For if his freend, thurgh any gate,
Wol compleyne of his povertee,
He shulde not byde so long, til he
Of his helping him requere;
For good deed, done [but] thurgh prayere,
Is sold, and bought to dere, y-wis,
To hert that of gret valour is.

For hert fulfilled of gentilnesse
Can yvel demene his distresse.
And man that worthy is of name
To asken often hath gret shame.
A good man brenneth in his thought
For shame, whan he axeth ought.
He hath gret thought, and dredith ay
For his disese, whan he shal pray
His freend, lest that he warned be,
Til that he preve his stabiltee.
But whan that he hath founden oon
That trusty is and trew as stone,
And [hath] assayed him at al,
And found him stedefast as a wal,
And of his freendship be certeyne,
He shal him shewe bothe Ioye and peyne,
And al that [he] dar thinke or sey,
Withoute shame, as he wel may.
For how shulde he ashamed be
Of sich oon as I tolde thee?
For whan he woot his secree thought,
The thridde shal knowe ther-of right nought;
For tweyn in nombre is bet than three
In every counsel and secree.
Repreve he dredeth never a del,
Who that biset his wordis wel;
For every wys man, out of drede,
Can kepe his tunge til he see nede;
And fooles can not holde hir tunge;
A fooles belle is sone runge.
Yit shal a trewe freend do more
To helpe his felowe of his sore,
And socoure him, whan he hath nede,
In al that he may doon in dede;
And gladder [be] that he him plesith
Than [is] his felowe that he esith.
And if he do not his requeste,
He shal as mochel him moleste
As his felow, for that he
May not fulfille his voluntee
[As] fully as he hath requered.
If bothe the hertis Love hath fered,
Joy and wo they shul depart,
And take evenly ech his part.
Half his anoy he shal have ay,
And comfort [him] what that he may;
And of his blisse parte shal he,
If love wol departed be.
'And whilom of this [amitee]
Spak Tullius in a ditee;
["A man] shulde maken his request
Unto his freend, that is honest;

And he goodly shulde it fulfille,
But it the more were out of skile,
And otherwise not graunt therto,
Except only in [cases] two:
If men his freend to deth wolde dryve,
Lat him be bisy to save his lyve.
Also if men wolen him assayle,
Of his wurship to make him faile,
And hindren him of his renoun,
Lat him, with ful entencioun,
His dever doon in ech degree
That his freend ne shamed be,
In this two [cases] with his might,
Taking no kepe to skile nor right,
As ferre as love may him excuse;
This oughte no man to refuse."
This love that I have told to thee
Is no-thing contrarie to me;
This wol I that thou folowe wel,
And leve the tother everydel.
This love to vertu al attendith,
The tothir fooles blent and shendith.
'Another love also there is,
That is contrarie unto this,
Which desyre is so constreyned
That [it] is but wille feyned;
Awey fro trouthe it doth so varie,
That to good love it is contrarie;
For it maymeth, in many wyse,
Syke hertis with coveityse;
Al in winning and in profyt
Sich love settith his delyt.
This love so hangeth in balaunce
That, if it lese his hope, perchaunce,
Of lucre, that he is set upon,
It wol faile, and quenche anon;
For no man may be amorous,
Ne in his living vertuous,
But-[if] he love more, in mood,
Men for hem-silf than for hir good.
For love that profit doth abyde
Is fals, and bit not in no tyde.
[This] love cometh of dame Fortune,
That litel whyle wol contune;
For it shal chaungen wonder sone,
And take eclips right as the mone,
Whan she is from us [y]-let
Thurgh erthe, that bitwixe is set
The sonne and hir, as it may falle,
Be it in party, or in alle;
The shadowe maketh her bemis merke,
And hir hornes to shewe derke,
That part where she hath lost hir lyght
Of Phebus fully, and the sight;
Til, whan the shadowe is overpast,
She is enlumined ageyn as faste,
Thurgh brightnesse of the sonne bemes
That yeveth to hir ageyn hir lemes.
That love is right of sich nature;
Now is [it] fair, and now obscure,
Now bright, now clipsy of manere,
And whylom dim, and whylom clere.
As sone as Poverte ginneth take,
With mantel and [with] wedis blake
[It] hidith of Love the light awey,
That into night it turneth day;
It may not see Richesse shyne
Til the blakke shadowes fyne.
For, whan Richesse shyneth bright,
Love recovereth ageyn his light;
And whan it failith, he wol flit,
And as she [groweth, so groweth] it.
'Of this love, here what I sey: —
The riche men are loved ay,
And namely tho that sparand bene,
That wol not wasshe hir hertes clene
Of the filthe, nor of the vyce
Of gredy brenning avaryce.
The riche man ful fond is, y-wis,
That weneth that he loved is.
If that his herte it undirstood,
It is not he, it is his good;
He may wel witen in his thought,
His good is loved, and he right nought.
For if he be a nigard eke,
Men wole not sette by him a leke,
But haten him; this is the soth.
Lo, what profit his catel doth!
Of every man that may him see,
It geteth him nought but enmitee.
But he amende him of that vyce,
And knowe him-silf, he is not wys.
'Certis, he shulde ay freendly be,
To gete him love also ben free,
Or ellis he is not wyse ne sage
No more than is a gote ramage.
That he not loveth, his dede proveth,
Whan he his richesse so wel loveth,
That he wol hyde it ay and spare,
His pore freendis seen forfare;
To kepe [it ay is] his purpose,
Til for drede his eyen close,
And til a wikked deth him take;
Him hadde lever asondre shake,
And late his limes asondre ryve,
Than leve his richesse in his lyve.

He thinkith parte it with no man;
Certayn, no love is in him than.
How shulde love within him be,
Whan in his herte is no pite?
That he trespasseth, wel I wat,
For ech man knowith his estat;
For wel him oughte be reproved
That loveth nought, ne is not loved.
'But sith we arn to Fortune comen,
And [han] our sermoun of hir nomen,
A wondir wil I telle thee now,
Thou herdist never sich oon, I trow.
I not wher thou me leven shal,
Though sothfastnesse it be [in] al,
As it is writen, and is sooth,
That unto men more profit doth
The froward Fortune and contraire,
Than the swote and debonaire:
And if thee thinke it is doutable,
It is thurgh argument provable.
For the debonaire and softe
Falsith and bigylith ofte;
For liche a moder she can cherishe
And milken as doth a norys;
And of hir goode to hem deles,
And yeveth hem part of her Ioweles,
With grete richesse and dignitee;
And hem she hoteth stabilitee
In a state that is not stable,
But chaunging ay and variable;
And fedith hem with glorie veyne,
And worldly blisse noncerteyne.
Whan she hem settith on hir whele,
Than wene they to be right wele,
And in so stable state withalle,
That never they wene for to falle.
And whan they set so highe be,
They wene to have in certeintee
Of hertly frendis [so] gret noumbre,
That no-thing mighte her stat encombre;
They truste hem so on every syde,
Wening with hem they wolde abyde
In every perel and mischaunce,
Withoute chaunge or variaunce,
Bothe of catel and of good;
And also for to spende hir blood
And alle hir membris for to spille,
Only to fulfille hir wille.
They maken it hole in many wyse,
And hoten hem hir ful servyse,
How sore that it do hem smerte,
Into hir very naked sherte!

Herte and al, so hole they yeve,
For the tyme that they may live,
So that, with her flaterye,
They maken foolis glorifye
Of hir wordis [greet] speking,
And han [there]-of a reioysing,
And trowe hem as the Evangyle;
And it is al falsheed and gyle,
As they shal afterwardes see,
Whan they arn falle in povertee,
And been of good and catel bare;
Than shulde they seen who freendis ware.
For of an hundred, certeynly,
Nor of a thousand ful scarsly,
Ne shal they fynde unnethis oon,
Whan povertee is comen upon.
For [this] Fortune that I of telle,
With men whan hir lust to dwelle,
Makith hem to lese hir conisaunce,
And nourishith hem in ignoraunce.
'But froward Fortune and perverse,
Whan high estatis she doth reverse,
And maketh hem to tumble doun
Of hir whele, with sodeyn tourn,
And from hir richesse doth hem flee,
And plongeth hem in povertee,
As a stepmoder envyous,
And leyeth a plastre dolorous
Unto her hertis, wounded egre,
Which is not tempred with vinegre,
But with poverte and indigence,
For to shewe, by experience,
That she is Fortune verely
In whom no man shulde affy,
Nor in hir yeftis have fiaunce,
She is so ful of variaunce.
Thus can she maken high and lowe,
Whan they from richesse ar[e]n throwe,
Fully to knowen, withouten were,
Freend of effect, and freend of chere;
And which in love weren trew and stable,
And whiche also weren variable,
After Fortune, hir goddesse,
In poverte, outher in richesse;
For al [she] yeveth, out of drede,
Unhappe bereveth it in dede;
For Infortune lat not oon
Of freendis, whan Fortune is goon;
I mene tho freendis that wol flee
Anoon as entreth povertee.
And yit they wol not leve hem so,
But in ech place where they go

They calle hem "wrecche," scorne and blame,
And of hir mishappe hem diffame,
And, namely, siche as in richesse
Pretendith most of stablenesse,
Whan that they sawe him set onlofte,
And weren of him socoured ofte,
And most y-holpe in al hir nede:
But now they take no maner hede,
But seyn, in voice of flaterye,
That now apperith hir folye,
Over-al where-so they fare,
And singe, "Go, farewel feldefare."
Alle suche freendis I beshrewe,
For of [the] trewe ther be to fewe;
But sothfast freendis, what so bityde,
In every fortune wolen abyde;
They han hir hertis in suche noblesse
That they nil love for no richesse;
Nor, for that Fortune may hem sende,
They wolen hem socoure and defende;
And chaunge for softe ne for sore,
For who is freend, loveth evermore.
Though men drawe swerd his freend to slo,
He may not hewe hir love a-two.
But, in [the] case that I shal sey,
For pride and ire lese it he may,
And for reprove by nycetee,
And discovering of privitee,
With tonge wounding, as feloun,
Thurgh venemous detraccioun.
Frend in this case wol gon his way,
For no-thing greve him more ne may;
And for nought ellis wol he flee,
If that he love in stabilitee.
And certeyn, he is wel bigoon
Among a thousand that fyndith oon.
For ther may be no richesse,
Ageyns frendship, of worthinesse;
For it ne may so high atteigne
As may the vaboure, sooth to seyne,
Of him that loveth trew and wel;
Frendship is more than is catel.
For freend in court ay better is
Than peny in [his] purs, certis;
And Fortune, mishapping,
Whan upon men she is [falling],
Thurgh misturning of hir chaunce,
And casteth hem oute of balaunce,
She makith, thurgh hir adversitee,
Men ful cleerly for to see
Him that is freend in existence
From him that is by apparence.
For Infortune makith anoon
To knowe thy freendis fro thy foon,
By experience, right as it is;
The which is more to preyse, y-wis,
Than [is] miche richesse and tresour;
For more [doth] profit and valour
Poverte, and such adversitee,
Bifore than doth prosperitee;
For the toon yeveth conisaunce,
And the tother ignoraunce.
'And thus in poverte is in ded:
Trouthe declared fro falsehede;
For feynte frendis it wol declare,
And trewe also, what wey they fare.
For whan he was in his richesse,
These freendis, ful of doublenesse,
Offrid him in many wyse
Hert and body, and servyse.
What wolde he than ha [yeve] to ha bought
To knowen openly her thought,
That he now hath so clerly seen?
The lasse bigyled he sholde have been
And he hadde than perceyved it,
But richesse nold not late him wit.
Wel more avauntage doth him than,
Sith that it makith him a wys man,
The greet mischeef that he [receyveth],
Than doth richesse that him deceyveth.
Richesse riche ne makith nought
Him that on tresour set his thought;
For richesse stont in suffisaunce
And no-thing in habundaunce;
For suffisaunce al-only
Makith men to live richely.
For he that hath [but] miches tweyne,
Ne [more] value in his demeigne,
Liveth more at ese, and more is riche,
Than doth he that is [so] chiche,
And in his bern hath, soth to seyn,
An hundred [muwis] of whete greyn,
Though he be chapman or marchaunt,
And have of golde many besaunt.
For in the geting he hath such wo,
And in the keping drede also,
And set evermore his bisynesse
For to encrese, and not to lesse,
For to augment and multiply.
And though on hepis [it] lye him by,
Yit never shal make his richesse
Asseth unto his gredinesse.
But the povre that recchith nought,

Save of his lyflode, in his thought,
Which that he getith with his travaile,
He dredith nought that it shal faile,
Though he have lytel worldis good,
Mete and drinke, and esy food,
Upon his travel and living,
And also suffisaunt clothing.
Or if in syknesse that he falle,
And lothe mete and drink withalle,
Though he have nought, his mete to by,
He shal bithinke him hastely,
To putte him out of al daunger,
That he of mete hath no mister;
Or that he may with litel eke
Be founden, whyl that he is seke;
Or that men shul him bere in hast,
To live, til his syknesse be past,
To somme maysondewe bisyde;
He cast nought what shal him bityde.
He thinkith nought that ever he shal
Into any syknesse falle.
'And though it falle, as it may be,
That al betyme spare shal he
As mochel as shal to him suffyce,
Whyl he is syke in any wyse,
He doth [it], for that he wol be
Content with his povertee
Withoute nede of any man.
So miche in litel have he can,
He is apayed with his fortune;
And for he nil be importune
Unto no wight, ne onerous,
Nor of hir goodes coveitous;
Therfore he spareth, it may wel been,
His pore estat for to sustene.
'Or if him lust not for to spare,
But suffrith forth, as nought ne ware,
Atte last it hapneth, as it may,
Right unto his laste day,
And taketh the world as it wolde be;
For ever in herte thenkith he,
The soner that [the] deeth him slo,
To paradys the soner go
He shal, there for to live in blisse,
Where that he shal no good misse.
Thider he hopith god shal him sende
Aftir his wrecchid lyves ende.
Pictagoras himsilf reherses,
In a book that the Golden Verses
Is clepid, for the nobilitee
Of the honourable ditee: —
"Than, whan thou gost thy body fro,
Free in the eir thou shalt up go,
And leven al humanitee,
And purely live in deitee." —
He is a fool, withouten were,
That trowith have his countre here.
"In erthe is not our countree,"
That may these clerkis seyn and see
In Boece of Consolacioun,
Where it is maked mencioun
Of our countree pleyn at the eye,
By teching of philosophye,
Where lewid men might lere wit,
Who-so that wolde translaten it.
If he be sich that can wel live
Aftir his rente may him yive,
And not desyreth more to have,
That may fro povertee him save:
A wys man seide, as we may seen,
Is no man wrecched, but he it wene,
Be he king, knight, or ribaud.
And many a ribaud is mery and baud,
That swinkith, and berith, bothe day and night,
Many a burthen of gret might,
The whiche doth him lasse offense,
For he suffrith in pacience.
They laugh and daunce, trippe and singe,
And ley not up for her living,
But in the tavern al dispendith
The winning that god hem sendith.
Than goth he, fardels for to bere,
With as good chere as he dide ere;
To swinke and traveile he not feynith,
For for to robben he disdeynith;
But right anoon, aftir his swinke,
He goth to tavern for to drinke.
Alle these ar riche in abundaunce,
That can thus have suffisaunce
Wel more than can an usurere,
As god wel knowith, withoute were.
For an usurer, so god me see,
Shal never for richesse riche bee,
But evermore pore and indigent,
Scarce, and gredy in his entent.
'For soth it is, whom it displese,
Ther may no marchaunt live at ese,
His herte in sich a were is set,
That it quik brenneth [more] to get,
Ne never shal [enough have] geten;
Though he have gold in gerners yeten,
For to be nedy he dredith sore.
Wherfore to geten more and more
He set his herte and his desire;
So hote he brennith in the fire

Of coveitise, that makith him wood
To purchase other mennes good.
He undirfongith a gret peyne,
That undirtakith to drinke up Seyne;
For the more he drinkith, ay
The more he leveth, the soth to say.
[This is the] thurst of fals geting,
That last ever in coveiting,
And the anguisshe and distresse
With the fire of gredinesse.
She fighteth with him ay, and stryveth,
That his herte asondre ryveth;
Such gredinesse him assaylith,
That whan he most hath, most he faylith.

'Phisiciens and advocates
Gon right by the same yates;
They selle hir science for winning,
And haunte hir crafte for greet geting.
Hir winning is of such swetnesse,
That if a man falle in sikenesse,
They are ful glad, for hir encrese;
For by hir wille, withoute lees,
Everiche man shulde be seke,
And though they dye, they set not a leke.
After, whan they the gold have take,
Ful litel care for hem they make.
They wolde that fourty were seke at onis,
Ye, two hundred, in flesh and bonis,
And yit two thousand, as I gesse,
For to encresen her richesse.
They wol not worchen, in no wyse,
But for lucre and coveityse;
For fysyk ginneth first by *fy*,
The fysycien also sothely;
And sithen it goth fro *fy* to *sy*;
To truste on hem, it is foly;
For they nil, in no maner gree,
Do right nought for charitee.

'Eke in the same secte are set
Alle tho that prechen for to get
Worshipes, honour, and richesse.
Her hertis arn in greet distresse,
That folk [ne] live not holily.
But aboven al, specialy,
Sich as prechen [for] veynglorie,
And toward god have no memorie,
But forth as ypocrites trace,
And to her soules deth purchace,
And outward [shewen] holynesse,
Though they be fulle of cursidnesse.

Not liche to the apostles twelve,
They deceyve other and hem-selve;
Bigyled is the gyler than.
For preching of a cursed man,
Though [it] to other may profyte,
Himsilf availeth not a myte;
For oft good predicacioun
Cometh of evel entencioun.
To him not vailith his preching,
Al helpe he other with his teching;
For where they good ensaumple take,
There is he with veynglorie shake.

'But lat us leven these prechoures,
And speke of hem that in her toures
Hepe up her gold, and faste shette,
And sore theron her herte sette.
They neither love god, ne drede;
They kepe more than it is nede,
And in her bagges sore it binde,
Out of the sonne, and of the winde;
They putte up more than nede ware,
Whan they seen pore folk forfare,
For hunger dye, and for cold quake;
God can wel vengeaunce therof take.
[Thre] gret mischeves hem assailith,
And thus in gadring ay travaylith;
With moche peyne they winne richesse;
And drede hem holdith in distresse,
To kepe that they gadre faste;
With sorwe they leve it at the laste;
With sorwe they bothe dye and live,
That to richesse her hertis yive,
And in defaute of love it is,
As it shewith ful wel, y-wis.
For if these gredy, the sothe to seyn,
Loveden, and were loved ageyn,
And good love regned over-alle,
Such wikkidnesse ne shulde falle;
But he shulde yeve that most good had
To hem that weren in nede bistad,
And live withoute fals usure,
For charitee ful clene and pure.
If they hem yeve to goodnesse,
Defending hem from ydelnesse,
In al this world than pore noon
We shulde finde, I trowe, not oon.
But chaunged is this world unstable;
For love is over-al vendable.
We see that no man loveth now
But for winning and for prow;
And love is thralled in servage
Whan it is sold for avauntage;

Yit wommen wol hir bodies selle; 5809
Suche soules goth to the devel of helle.'

[*Here ends* l. 5170 *of the* F. text. *A great gap follows. The next line answers to* l. 10717 *of the same.*]

FRAGMENT C.

Whan Love had told hem his entente,
The baronage to councel wente;
In many sentences they fille,
And dyversly they seide hir wille:
But aftir discord they accorded, 5815
And hir accord to Love recorded.
'Sir,' seiden they, 'we been at oon,
By even accord of everichoon,
Out-take Richesse al-only,
That sworen hath ful hauteynly, 5820
That she the castel nil assaile,
Ne smyte a stroke in this bataile,
With dart, ne mace, spere, ne knyf,
For man that speketh or bereth the lyf,
And blameth your empryse, y-wis, 5825
And from our hoost departed is,
(At leeste wey, as in this plyte,)
So hath she this man in dispyte;
For she seith he ne loved hir never,
And therfor she wol hate him ever. 5830
For he wol gadre no tresore,
He hath hir wrath for evermore.
He agilte hir never in other caas,
Lo, here al hoolly his trespas!
She seith wel, that this other day 5835
He asked hir leve to goon the way
That is clepid To-moche-Yeving,
And spak ful faire in his praying;
But whan he prayde hir, pore was he,
Therfore she warned him the entree. 5840
Ne yit is he not thriven so
That he hath geten a peny or two,
That quitly is his owne in hold.
Thus hath Richesse us alle told;
And whan Richesse us this recorded,
Withouten hir we been accorded. 5846
'And we finde in our accordaunce,
That False-Semblant and Abstinaunce,
With alle the folk of hir bataile,
Shulle at the hinder gate assayle, 5850
That Wikkid-Tunge hath in keping,
With his Normans, fulle of langling.
And with hem Curtesie and Largesse,
That shulle shewe hir hardinesse
To the olde wyf that [kepeth] so harde
Fair-Welcoming within her warde. 5856
Than shal Delyte and Wel-Helinge
Fonde Shame adoun to bringe;
With al hir hoost, erly and late,
They shulle assailen [thilke] gate. 5860
Agaynes Drede shal Hardinesse
Assayle, and also Sikernesse,
With al the folk of hir leding,
That never wist what was fleing.
'Fraunchyse shal fighte, and eek Pitee,
With Daunger ful of crueltee. 5866
Thus is your hoost ordeyned wel;
Doun shal the castel every del,
If everiche do his entente,
So that Venus be presente, 5870
Your modir, ful of vassalage,
That can y-nough of such usage;
Withouten hir may no wight spede
This werk, neither for word ne dede.
Therfore is good ye for hir sende, 5875
For thurgh hir may this werk amende.'
Amour. 'Lordinges, my modir, the goddesse,
That is my lady, and my maistresse,
Nis not [at] al at my willing,
Ne doth not al my desyring. 5880
Yit can she som-tyme doon labour,
Whan that hir lust, in my socour,
[Al my nedis] for to acheve,
But now I thenke hir not to greve.
My modir is she, and of childhede 5885
I bothe worshipe hir, and eek drede;
For who that dredith sire ne dame
Shal it abye in body or name.
And, natheles, yit cunne we
Sende aftir hir, if nede be; 5890
And were she nigh, she comen wolde,
I trowe that no-thing might hir holde.
'My modir is of greet prowesse;
She hath tan many a forteresse,
That cost hath many a pound er this,
Ther I nas not present, y-wis; 5896
And yit men seide it was my dede;
But I come never in that stede;
Ne me ne lykith, so mote I thee,
Such toures take withoute me. 5900
For-why me thenketh that, in no wyse,
It may been cleped but marchandise.
'Go bye a courser, blak or whyte,
And pay therfor; than art thou quyte.
The marchaunt oweth thee right nought,

Ne thou him, whan thou [hast] it bought.
I wol not selling clepe yeving,
For selling axeth no guerdoning;
Here lyth no thank, ne no meryte,
That oon goth from that other al quyte.
But this selling is not semblable;
For, whan his hors is in the stable,
He may it selle ageyn, pardee,
And winne on it, such hap may be;
Al may the man not lese, y-wis,
For at the leest the skin is his.
Or elles, if it so bityde
That he wol kepe his hors to ryde,
Yit is he lord ay of his hors.
But thilke chaffare is wel wors,
There Venus entremeteth nought;
For who-so such chaffare hath bought,
He shal not worchen so wysly,
That he ne shal lese al outerly
Bothe his money and his chaffare;
But the seller of the ware
The prys and profit have shal.
Certeyn, the byer shal lese al;
For he ne can so dere it bye
To have lordship and ful maistrye,
Ne have power to make letting
Neither for yift ne for preching,
That of his chaffare, maugre his,
Another shal have as moche, y-wis,
If he wol yeve as moche as he,
Of what contrey so that he be;
Or for right nought, so happe may,
If he can flater hir to hir pay.
Ben than suche marchaunts wyse?
No, but fooles in every wyse,
Whan they bye such thing wilfully,
Ther-as they lese her good [fully].
But natheles, this dar I saye,
My modir is not wont to paye,
For she is neither so fool ne nyce,
To entremete hir of sich vyce.
But truste wel, he shal paye al,
That repente of his bargeyn shal,
Whan Poverte put him in distresse,
Al were he scoler to Richesse,
That is for me in gret yerning,
Whan she assenteth to my willing.
'But, [by] my modir seint Venus,
And by hir fader Saturnus,
That hir engendrid by his lyf,
But not upon his weddid wyf!
Yit wol I more unto you swere,
To make this thing the scurere;
Now by that feith, and that leautee
I owe to alle my brethren free,
Of which ther nis wight under heven
That can her fadris names neven,
So dyvers and so many ther be
That with my modir have be privee!
Yit wolde I swere, for sikirnesse,
The pole of helle to my witnesse,
Now drinke I not this yeer clarree,
If that I lye, or forsworn be!
(For of the goddes the usage is,
That who-so him forswereth amis,
Shal that yeer drinke no clarree).
Now have I sworn y-nough, pardee;
If I forswere me, than am I lorn,
But I wol never be forsworn.
Sith Richesse hath me failed here,
She shal abye that trespas dere,
At leeste wey, but [she] hir arme
With swerd, or sparth, or gisarme.
For certes, sith she loveth not me,
Fro thilke tyme that she may see
The castel and the tour to-shake,
In sory tyme she shal awake.
If I may grype a riche man,
I shal so pulle him, if I can,
That he shal, in a fewe stoundes,
Lese alle his markes and his poundes.
I shal make him his pens outslinge,
But-[if] they in his gerner springe;
Our maydens shal eek plukke him so,
That him shal neden fetheres mo,
And make him selle his lond to spende,
But he the bet cunne him defende.
'Pore men han maad hir lord of me;
Although they not so mighty be,
That they may fede me in delyt,
I wol not have hem in despyt.
No good man hateth hem, as I gesse,
For chinche and feloun is Richesse,
That so can chase hem and dispyse,
And hem defoule in sundry wyse.
They loven ful bet, so god me spede,
Than doth the riche, chinchy grede,
And been, in good feith, more stable
And trewer, and more serviable;
And therfore it sufiysith me
Hir good herte, and hir leautee.
They han on me set al hir thought,
And therfore I forgete hem nought.
I wolde hem bringe in greet noblesse,
If that I were god of Richesse,
As I am god of Love, sothly,

Such routhe upon hir pleynt have I.
Therfore I must his socour be,
That peyneth him to serven me;
For if he deyde for love of this,
Than semeth in me no love ther is.'
'Sir,' seide they, 'sooth is, every del,
That ye reherce, and we wot wel
Thilk oth to holde is resonable;
For it is good and covenable,
That ye on riche men han sworn.
For, sir, this wot we wel biforn;
If riche men doon you homage,
That is as fools doon outrage;
But ye shul not forsworen be,
Ne let therfore to drinke clarree,
Or piment maked fresh and newe.
Ladyes shulle hem such pepir brewe,
If that they falle into hir laas,
That they for wo mowe seyn "Allas!"
Ladyes shuln ever so curteis be,
That they shal quyte your oth al free.
Ne seketh never other vicaire,
For they shall speke with hem so faire
That ye shal holde you payed ful wel,
Though ye you medle never a del.
Lat ladies worche with hir thinges,
They shal hem telle so fele tydinges,
And moeve hem eke so many requestis
By flatery, that not honest is,
And therto yeve hem such thankinges,
What with kissing, and with talkinges,
That certes, if they trowed be,
Shal never leve hem lond ne fee
That it nil as the moeble fare,
Of which they first delivered are.
Now may ye telle us al your wille,
And we your hestes shal fulfille.
'But Fals-Semblant dar not, for drede
Of you, sir, medle him of this dede,
For he seith that ye been his fo;
He not, if ye wol worche him wo.
Wherfore we pray you alle, beausire,
That ye forgive him now your ire,
And that he may dwelle, as your man,
With Abstinence, his dere lemman;
This our accord and.our wil now.'
'Parfay,' seide Love, 'I graunte it yow;
I wol wel holde him for my man;
Now lat him come:' and he forth ran.
'Fals-Semblant,' quod Love, 'in this wyse
I take thee here to my servyse,
That thou our freendis helpe alway,
And hindre hem neithir night ne day,
But do thy might hem to releve,
And eek our enemies that thou greve.
Thyn be this might, I graunt it thee,
My king of harlotes shalt thou be;
We wol that thou have such honour.
Certeyn, thou art a fals traitour,
And eek a theef; sith thou were born,
A thousand tyme thou art forsworn.
But, natheles, in our hering,
To putte our folk out of douting,
I bid thee teche hem, wostow how?
By somme general signe now,
In what place thou shalt founden be,
If that men had mister of thee;
And how men shal thee best espye,
For thee to knowe is greet maistrye;
Tel in what place is thyn haunting.'
F. Sem. 'Sir, I have fele dyvers woning,
That I kepe not rehersed be,
So that ye wolde respyten me.
For if that I telle you the sothe,
I may have harm and shame bothe.
If that my felowes wisten it,
My tales shulden me be quit;
For certeyn, they wolde hate me,
If ever I knewe hir cruelte;
For they wolde over-al holde hem stille
Of trouthe that is ageyn hir wille;
Suche tales kepen they not here.
I might eftsone bye it ful dere,
If I seide of hem any thing,
That ought displeseth to hir hering.
For what word that hem prikke or byteth,
In that word noon of hem delyteth,
Al were it gospel, the evangyle,
That wolde reprove hem of hir gyle,
For they are cruel and hauteyn.
And this thing wot I wel, certeyn,
If I speke ought to peire hir loos,
Your court shal not so wel be cloos,
That they ne shal wite it atte last.
Of good men am I nought agast,
For they wol taken on hem no-thing,
Whan that they knowe al my mening;
But he that wol it on him take,
He wol himself suspecious make,
That he his lyf let covertly,
In Gyle and in Ipocrisy,
That me engendred and yaf fostring.'
'They made a ful good engendring,'

Quod Love, 'for who-so soothly telle,
They engendred the devel of helle! 6116
'But nedely, how-so-ever it be,'
Quod Love, 'I wol and charge thee,
To telle anoon thy woning-places,
Hering ech wight that in this place is;
And what lyf that thou livest also, 6121
Hyde it no lenger now; wherto?
Thou most discover al thy wurching,
How thou servest, and of what thing,
Though that thou shuldest for thy soth-sawe 6125
Ben al to-beten and to-drawe;
And yit art thou not wont, pardee.
But natheles, though thou beten be,
Thou shalt not be the first, that so
Hath for soth-sawe suffred wo.' 6130
F. Sem. 'Sir, sith that it may lyken you,
Though that I shulde be slayn right now,
I shal don your comaundement,
For therto have I gret talent.'
Withouten wordes mo, right than,
Fals-Semblant his sermon bigan, 6136
And seide hem thus in audience:—
'Barouns, tak hede of my sentence!
That wight that list to have knowing
Of Fals-Semblant, ful of flatering, 6140
He must in worldly folk him seke,
And, certes, in the cloistres eke;
I wone no-where but in hem tweye;
But not lyk even, sooth to seye;
Shortly, I wol herberwe me 6145
There I hope best to hulstred be;
And certeynly, sikerest hyding
Is undirneth humblest clothing.
'Religious folk ben ful covert;
Seculer folk ben more appert. 6150
But natheles, I wol not blame
Religious folk, ne hem diffame,
In what habit that ever they go:
Religioun humble, and trewe also,
Wol I not blame, ne dispyse, 6155
But I nil love it, in no wyse.
I mene of fals religious,
That stoute ben, and malicious;
That wolen in an abit go,
And setten not hir herte therto. 6160
'Religious folk ben al pitous;
Thou shalt not seen oon dispitous.
They loven no pryde, ne no stryf,
But humbly they wol lede hir lyf;
With swich folk wol I never be. 6165
And if I dwelle, I feyne me
I may wel in her abit go;
But me were lever my nekke atwo,
Than lete a purpose that I take,
What covenaunt that ever I make. 6170
I dwelle with hem that proude be,
And fulle of wyles and subtelte;
That worship of this world coveyten,
And grete nedes cunne espleyten; 6174
And goon and gadren greet pitaunces,
And purchace hem the acqueyntaunces
Of men that mighty lyf may leden;
And feyne hem pore, and hem-self feden
With gode morcels delicious,
And drinken good wyn precious, 6180
And preche us povert and distresse,
And fisshen hem-self greet richesse
With wyly nettis that they caste:
It wol come foul out at the laste.
They ben fro clene religioun went; 6185
They make the world an argument
That hath a foul conclusioun.
"I have a robe of religioun,
Than am I al religious:"
This argument is al roignous; 6190
It is not worth a croked brere;
Habit ne maketh monk ne frere,
But clene lyf and devocioun
Maketh gode men of religioun.
Nathelesse, ther can noon answere, 6195
How high that ever his heed he shere
With rasour whetted never so kene,
That Gyle in braunches cut thrittene;
Ther can no wight distincte it so,
That he dar sey a word therto. 6200
'But what herberwe that ever I take,
Or what semblant that ever I make,
I mene but gyle, and folowe that;
For right no mo than Gibbe our cat
[Fro myce and rattes went his wyle], 6205
Ne entende I [not] but to begyle;
Ne no wight may, by my clothing,
Wite with what folk is my dwelling;
Ne by my wordis yet, pardee,
So softe and so plesaunt they be. 6210
Bihold the dedis that I do;
But thou be blind, thou oughtest so;
For, varie hir wordis fro hir dede,
They thenke on gyle, withouten drede,
What maner clothing that they were, 6215
Or what estat that ever they bere,
Lered or lewd, lord or lady,
Knight, squier, burgeis, or bayly.'

Right thus whyl Fals-Semblant sermoneth,
Eftsones Love him aresoneth,
And brak his tale in the speking
As though he had him told lesing;
And seide: 'What, devel, is that I here?
What folk hast thou us nempned here?
May men find religioun
In worldly habitacioun?'
F. Sem. 'Ye, sir; it foloweth not that they
Shulde lede a wikked lyf, parfey,
Ne not therfore her soules lese,
That hem to worldly clothes chese;
For, certis, it were gret pitee.
Men may in seculer clothes see
Florisshen holy religioun.
Ful many a seynt in feeld and toun,
With many a virgin glorious,
Devout, and ful religious,
Had deyed, that comun clothe ay beren,
Yit seyntes never-the-les they weren.
I coude reken you many a ten;
Ye, wel nigh alle these holy wimmen,
That men in chirchis herie and seke,
Bothe maydens, and these wyves eke,
That baren many a fair child here,
Wered alwey clothis seculere,
And in the same dyden they,
That seyntes weren, and been alwey.
The eleven thousand maydens dere,
That beren in heven hir ciergis clere,
Of which men rede in chirche, and singe,
Were take in seculer clothing,
Whan they resseyved martirdom,
And wonnen heven unto her hoom.
Good herte makith the gode thought;
The clothing yeveth ne reveth nought.
The gode thought and the worching,
That maketh religioun flowring,
Ther lyth the good religioun
Aftir the right entencioun.
'Who-so toke a wethers skin,
And wrapped a gredy wolf therein,
For he shulde go with lambis whyte,
Whenest thou not he wolde hem byte?
Yis! never-the-las, as he were wood,
He wolde hem wery, and drinke the blood;
And wel the rather hem disceyve,
For, sith they coude not perceyve
His treget and his crueltee,
They wolde him folowe, al wolde he flee.
'If ther be wolves of sich hewe
Amonges these apostlis newe,
Thou, holy chirche, thou mayst be wayled!
Sith that thy citee is assayled
Thourgh knightis of thyn owne table,
God wot thy lordship is doutable!
If they enforce [hem] it to winne,
That shulde defende it fro withinne,
Who might defence ayens hem make?
Withouten stroke it mot be take
Of trepeget or mangonel;
Without displaying of pensel.
And if god nil don it socour,
But lat [hem] renne in this colour,
Thou moost thyn heestis laten be.
Than is ther nought, but yelde thee,
Or yeve hem tribute, doutelees,
And holde it of hem to have pees:
But gretter harm bityde thee,
That they al maister of it be.
Wel conne they scorne thee withal;
By day stuffen they the wal,
And al the night they mynen there.
Nay, thou most planten elleswhere
Thyn impes, if thou wolt fruyt have;
Abyd not there thy-self to save.
'But now pees! here I turne ageyn;
I wol no more of this thing seyn,
If I may passen me herby;
I mighte maken you wery.
But I wol heten you alway
To helpe your freendis what I may,
So they wollen my company;
For they be shent al-outerly
But-if so falle, that I be
Oft with hem, and they with me.
And eek my lemman mot they serve,
Or they shul not my love deserve.
Forsothe, I am a fals traitour;
God iugged me for a theef trichour;
Forsworn I am, but wel nygh non
Wot of my gyle, til it be don.
'Thourgh me hath many oon deth resseyved,
That my treget never aperceyved;
And yit resseyveth, and shal resseyve,
That my falsnesse never aperceyve:
But who-so doth, if he wys be,
Him is right good be war of me.
But so sligh is the [deceyving
That to hard is the] aperceyving.
For Protheus, that coude him chaunge
In every shap, hoomly and straunge,

Coude never sich gyle ne tresoun
As I; for I com never in toun
Ther-as I mighte knowen be,
Though men me bothe might here and see.
Ful wel I can my clothis chaunge,
Take oon, and make another straunge.
Now am I knight, now chasteleyn;
Now prelat, and now chapeleyn;
Now prest, now clerk, and now forstere;
Now am I maister, now scolere;
Now monk, now chanoun, now baily;
What-ever mister man am I.
Now am I prince, now am I page,
And can by herte every langage.
Som-tyme am I hoor and old;
Now am I yong, [and] stout, and bold;
Now am I Robert, now Robyn;
Now frere Menour, now Iacobyn;
And with me folweth my loteby,
To don me solas and company,
That hight dame Abstinence-Streyned,
In many a queynt array [y]-feyned.
Right as it cometh to hir lyking,
I fulfille al hir desiring.
Somtyme a wommans cloth take I;
Now am I mayde, now lady.
Sometyme I am religious;
Now lyk an anker in an hous.
Somtyme am I prioresse,
And now a nonne, and now abbesse;
And go thurgh alle regiouns,
Seking alle religiouns.
But to what ordre that I am sworn,
I take the strawe, and lete the corn;
To [blynde] folk [ther] I enhabite,
I axe no-more but hir abite.
What wol ye more? in every wyse,
Right as me list, I me disgyse.
Wel can I bere me under weed;
Unlyk is my word to my deed.
Thus make I in my trappis falle,
Thurgh my pryvileges, alle
That ben in Cristendom alyve.
I may assoile, and I may shryve,
That no prelat may lette me,
Al folk, wher-ever they founde be:
I noot no prelat may don so,
But it the pope be, and no mo,
That made thilk establisshing.
Now is not this a propre thing?
But, were my sleightis aperceyved,
[Ne shulde I more been receyved]
As I was wont; and wostow why?
For I dide hem a tregetry;
But therof yeve I litel tale,
I have the silver and the male;
So have I preched and eek shriven,
So have I take, so have [me] yiven,
Thurgh hir foly, husbond and wyf,
That I lede right a Ioly lyf,
Thurgh simplesse of the prelacye;
They know not al my tregetrye.
'But for as moche as man and wyf
Shuld shewe hir paroche-prest hir lyf
Ones a yeer, as seith the book,
Er any wight his housel took,
Than have I pryvilegis large,
That may of moche thing discharge;
For he may seye right thus, pardee: —
"Sir Preest, in shrift I telle it thee,
That he, to whom that I am shriven,
Hath me assoiled, and me yiven
Penaunce soothly, for my sinne,
Which that I fond me gilty inne;
Ne I ne have never entencioun
To make double confessioun,
Ne reherce eft my shrift to thee;
O shrift is right y-nough to me.
This oughte thee suffyce wel,
Ne be not rebel never-a-del;
For certis, though thou haddest it sworn,
I wot no prest ne prelat born
That may to shrift eft me constreyne.
And if they don, I wol me pleyne;
For I wot where to pleyne wel.
Thou shalt not streyne me a del,
Ne enforce me, ne [yit] me trouble,
To make my confessioun double.
Ne I have none affeccioun
To have double absolucioun.
The firste is right y-nough to me;
This latter assoiling quyte I thee.
I am unbounde; what mayst thou finde
More of my sinnes me to unbinde?
For he, that might hath in his hond,
Of alle my sinnes me unbond.
And if thou wolt me thus constreyne,
That me mot nedis on thee pleyne,
There shal no Iugge imperial,
Ne bisshop, ne official,
Don Iugement on me; for I
Shal gon and pleyne me openly
Unto my shrift-fadir newe,
(That hight not Frere Wolf untrewe!)
And he shal chevise him for me,

For I trowe he can hampre thee.
But, lord! he wolde be wrooth withalle,
If men him wolde Frere Wolf calle!
For he wolde have no pacience,
But don al cruel vengeaunce!
He wolde his might don at the leest,
[Ne] no-thing spare for goddis heest.
And, god so wis be my socour,
But thou yeve me my Saviour
At Ester, whan it lyketh me,
Withoute presing more on thee,
I wol forth, and to him goon,
And he shal housel me anoon,
For I am out of thy grucching;
I kepe not dele with thee no-thing."
Thus may he shryve him, that forsaketh
His paroche-prest, and to me taketh.
And if the prest wol him refuse,
I am ful redy him to accuse,
And him punisshe and hampre so,
That he his chirche shal forgo.
'But who-so hath in his feling
The consequence of such shryving,
Shal seen that prest may never have might
To knowe the conscience aright
Of him that is under his cure.
And this ageyns holy scripture,
That biddeth every herde honeste
Have verry knowing of his beste.
But pore folk that goon by strete,
That have no gold, ne sommes grete,
Hem wolde I lete to her prelates,
Or lete hir prestis knowe hir states,
For to me right nought yeve they.'
Amour. 'And why is it?'
F. Sem. 'For they ne may.
They ben so bare, I take no keep;
But I wol have the fatte sheep; —
Lat parish prestis have the lene,
I yeve not of hir harm a bene!
And if that prelats grucchen it,
That oughten wroth be in hir wit,
To lese her fatte bestes so,
I shal yeve hem a stroke or two,
That they shal lesen with [the] force,
Ye, bothe hir mytre and hir croce.
Thus Iape I hem, and have do longe,
My priveleges been so stronge.'
Fals-Semblant wolde have stinted here,
But Love ne made him no such chere
That he was wery of his sawe;
But for to make him glad and fawe,
He seide: — 'Tel on more specialy,
How that thou servest untrewly.
Tel forth, and shame thee never a del;
For as thyn abit shewith wel,
Thou [semest] an holy heremyte.'
F. Sem. 'Soth is, but I am an ypocryte.'
Amour. 'Thou gost and prechest povertee?'
F. Sem. 'Ye, sir; but richesse hath poustee.'
Amour. 'Thou prechest abstinence also?'
F. Sem. 'Sir, I wol fillen, so mote I go,
My paunche of gode mete and wyne,
As shulde a maister of divyne;
For how that I me pover feyne,
Yit alle pore folk I disdeyne.
'I love bet the acqueyntaunce
Ten tymes, of the king of Fraunce,
Than of pore man of mylde mode,
Though that his soule be also gode.
For whan I see beggers quaking,
Naked on mixens al stinking,
For hungre crye, and eek for care,
I entremete not of hir fare.
They been so pore, and ful of pyne,
They might not ones yeve me dyne,
For they have no-thing but hir lyf;
What shulde he yeve that likketh his knyf?
It is but foly to entremete,
To seke in houndes nest fat mete.
Let bere hem to the spitel anoon,
But, for me, comfort gete they noon.
But a riche sike usurere
Wolde I visyte and drawe nere;
Him wol I comforte and rehete,
For I hope of his gold to gete.
And if that wikked deth him have,
I wol go with him to his grave.
And if ther any reprove me,
Why that I lete the pore be,
Wostow how I [mot] ascape?
I sey, and swerë him ful rape,
That riche men han more tecches
Of sinne, than han pore wrecches,
And han of counseil more mister;
And therfore I wol drawe hem ner.
But as gret hurt, it may so be,
Hath soule in right gret poverte,
As soul in gret richesse, forsothe,

Al-be-it that they hurten bothe.
For richesse and mendicitees
Ben cleped two extremitees;
The mene is cleped suffisaunce,
Ther lyth of vertu the aboundaunce.
For Salamon, ful wel I woot,
In his Parables us wroot,
As it is knowe of many a wight,
In his [thrittethe] chapitre right:
"God, thou me kepe, for thy poustee,
Fro richesse and mendicitee;
For if a riche man him dresse
To thenke to moche on [his] richesse,
His herte on that so fer is set,
That he his creatour foryet;
And him, that [begging] wol ay greve,
How shulde I by his word him leve?
Unnethe that he nis a micher,
Forsworn, or elles [god is] lyer."
Thus seith Salamones sawes;
Ne we finde writen in no lawes,
And namely in our Cristen lay—
(Who seith "ye," I dar sey "nay")—
That Crist, ne his apostlis dere,
Whyl that they walkede in erthe here,
Were never seen her bred begging,
For they nolde beggen for no-thing.
And right thus were men wont to teche;
And in this wyse wolde it preche
The maistres of divinitee
Somtyme in Paris the citee.
'And if men wolde ther-geyn appose
The naked text, and lete the glose,
It mighte sone assoiled be;
For men may wel the sothe see,
That, parde, they mighte axe a thing
Pleynly forth, without begging.
For they weren goddis herdis dere,
And cure of soules hadden here,
They nolde no-thing begge hir fode;
For aftir Crist was don on rode,
With [hir] propre hondis they wrought,
And with travel, and elles nought,
They wonnen al hir sustenaunce,
And liveden forth in hir penaunce,
And the remenaunt [yeve] awey
To other pore folk alwey.
They neither bilden tour ne halle,
But [leye] in houses smale with alle.
A mighty man, that can and may,
Shulde with his honde and body alway
Winne him his food in laboring,
If he ne have rent or sich a thing,
Although he be religious,
And God to serven curious.
Thus mote he don, or do trespas,
But-if it be in certeyn cas,
That I can reherce, if mister be,
Right wel, whan the tyme I see.
'Seke the book of Seynt Austin,
Be it in paper or perchemin,
There-as he writ of these worchinges,
Thou shalt seen that non excusinges
A parfit man ne shulde seke
By wordis, ne by dedis eke,
Although he be religious,
And god to serven curious,
That he ne shal, so mote I go,
With propre hondis and body also,
Gete his food in laboring,
If he ne have propretee of thing.
Yit shulde he selle al his substaunce,
And with his swink have sustenaunce,
If he be parfit in bountee.
Thus han tho bookes tolde me:
For he that wol gon ydilly,
And useth it ay besily
To haunten other mennes table,
He is a trechour, ful of fable;
Ne he ne may, by gode resoun,
Excuse him by his orisoun.
For men bihoveth, in som gyse,
Som-tyme [leven] goddes servyse
To gon and purchasen her nede.
Men mote eten, that is no drede,
And slepe, and eek do other thing;
So longe may they leve praying.
So may they eek hir prayer blinne,
While that they werke, hir mete to winne.
Seynt Austin wol therto accorde,
In thilke book that I recorde.
Justinian eek, that made lawes,
Hath thus forboden, by olde dawes,
"No man, up peyne to be deed,
Mighty of body, to begge his breed,
If he may swinke, it for to gete;
Men shulde him rather mayme or bete,
Or doon of him apert Iustice,
Than suffren him in such malice."
They don not wel, so mote I go,
That taken such almesse so,
But if they have som privelege,
That of the peyne hem wol allege.
But how that is, can I not see,
But-if the prince disseyved be;
Ne I ne wene not, sikerly,

That they may have it rightfully.
But I wol not determyne
Of princes power, ne defyne,
Ne by my word comprende, y-wis,
If it so fer may strecche in this.
I wol not entremete a del;
But I trowe that the book seith wel,
Who that taketh almesses, that be
Dewe to folk that men may see
Lame, feble, wery, and bare,
Pore, or in such maner care,
(That conne winne hem nevermo,
For they have no power therto),
He eteth his owne dampning,
But-if he lye, that made al thing.
And if ye such a truaunt finde,
Chastise him wel, if ye be kinde.
But they wolde hate you, percas,
And, if ye fillen in hir laas,
They wolde eftsones do you scathe,
If that they mighte, late or rathe;
For they be not ful pacient,
That han the world thus foule blent.
And witeth wel, [wher] that god bad
The good man selle al that he had,
And folowe him, and to pore it yive,
He wolde not therfore that he live
To serven him in mendience,
For it was never his sentence;
But he bad wirken whan that nede is,
And folwe him in goode dedis.
Seynt Poule, that loved al holy chirche
He bade thapostles for to wirche,
And winnen hir lyflode in that wyse,
And hem defended truaundyse,
And seide, "Wirketh with your honden;"
Thus shulde the thing be undirstonden.
He nolde, y-wis, bidde hem begging,
Ne sellen gospel, ne preching,
Lest they berafte, with hir asking,
Folk of hir catel or of hir thing.
For in this world is many a man
That yeveth his good, for he ne can
Werne it for shame, or elles he
Wolde of the asker delivered be;
And, for he him encombreth so,
He yeveth him good to late him go:
But it can him no-thing profyte,
They lese the yift and the meryte.
The goode folk, that Poule to preched,
Profred him ofte, whan he hem teched,
Som of hir good in charite;
But therof right no-thing took he;
But of his hondwerk wolde he gete
Clothes to wryen him, and his mete.'

Amour. 'Tel me than how a man may liven,
That al his good to pore hath yiven,
And wol but only bidde his bedis,
And never with honde laboure his nedis:
May he do so?'

F. Sem. 'Ye, sir.'

Amour. 'And how?'

F. Sem. 'Sir, I wol gladly telle yow:—
Seynt Austin seith, a man may be
In houses that han propretee,
As templers and hospitelers,
And as these chanouns regulers,
Or whyte monkes, or these blake—
(I wole no mo ensamplis make)—
And take therof his sustening,
For therinne lyth no begging;
But other-weyes not, y-wis,
[If] Austin gabbeth not of this.
And yit ful many a monk laboureth,
That god in holy chirche honoureth;
For whan hir swinking is agoon,
They rede and singe in chirche anoon.
'And for ther hath ben greet discord,
As many a wight may bere record,
Upon the estate of mendience,
I wol shortly, in your presence,
Telle how a man may begge at nede,
That hath not wherwith him to fede,
Maugre his felones Iangelinges,
For sothfastnesse wol non hidinges;
And yit, percas, I may abey,
That I to yow sothly thus sey.
'Lo, here the caas especial:
If a man be so bestial
That he of no craft hath science,
And nought desyreth ignorence,
Than may he go a-begging yerne,
Til he som maner craft can lerne,
Thurgh which, withoute truaunding,
He may in trouthe have his living.
Or if he may don no labour,
For elde, or syknesse, or langour,
Or for his tendre age also,
Than may he yit a-begging go.
'Or if he have, peraventure,
Thurgh usage of his noriture,
Lived over deliciously,
Than oughten good folk comunly
Han of his mischeef som pitee,
And suffren him also, that he

May gon aboute and begge his breed,
That he be not for hungur deed.
Or if he have of craft cunning,
And strengthe also, and desiring
To wirken, as he hadde what,
But he finde neither this ne that,
Than may he begge, til that he
Have geten his necessitee.
'Or if his winning be so lyte,
That his labour wol not acquyte
Sufficiantly al his living,
Yit may he go his breed begging;
Fro dore to dore he may go trace,
Til he the remenaunt may purchace.
Or if a man wolde undirtake
Any empryse for to make,
In the rescous of our lay,
And it defenden as he may,
Be it with armes or lettrure,
Or other covenable cure,
If it be so he pore be,
Than may he begge, til that he
May finde in trouthe for to swinke,
And gete him clothes, mete, and drinke.
Swinke he with hondis corporel,
And not with hondis espirituel.
'In al thise caas, and in semblables,
If that ther ben mo resonables,
He may begge, as I telle you here,
And elles nought, in no manere;
As William Seynt Amour wolde preche,
And ofte wolde dispute and teche
Of this matere alle openly
At Paris ful solempnely.
And al-so god my soule blesse,
As he had, in this stedfastnesse,
The accord of the universitee,
And of the puple, as semeth me.
'No good man oughte it to refuse,
Ne oughte him therof to excuse,
Be wrooth or blythe who-so be;
For I wol speke, and telle it thee,
Al shulde I dye, and be put doun,
As was seynt Poul, in derk prisoun;
Or be exiled in this caas
With wrong, as maister William was,
That my moder Ypocrisye
Banisshed for hir greet envye.
'My moder flemed him, Seynt Amour:
This noble dide such labour
To susteyne ever the loyaltee,
That he to moche agilte me.
He made a book, and leet it wryte,
Wherin his lyf he dide al wryte,
And wolde ich reneyed begging,
And lived by my traveyling,
If I ne had rent ne other good.
What? wened he that I were wood?
For labour might me never plese,
I have more wil to been at ese;
And have wel lever, sooth to sey,
Bifore the puple patre and prey,
And wrye me in my foxerye
Under a cope of papelardye.'
Quod Love, 'What devel is this I here?
What wordis tellest thou me here?'
F. Sem. 'What, sir?'
Amour. 'Falsnesse, that apert is;
Than dredist thou not god?'
F. Sem. 'No, certis:
For selde in greet thing shal he spede
In this world, that god wol drede.
For folk that hem to vertu yiven,
And truly on her owne liven,
And hem in goodnesse ay contene,
On hem is litel thrift y-sene;
Such folk drinken gret misese;
That lyf [ne] may me never plese.
But see what gold han usurers,
And silver eek in [hir] garners,
Taylagiers, and these monyours,
Bailifs, bedels, provost, countours;
These liven wel nygh by ravyne;
The smale puple hem mote enclyne,
And they as wolves wol hem eten.
Upon the pore folk they geten
Ful moche of that they spende or kepe;
Nis none of hem that he nil strepe,
And wryen him-self wel atte fulle;
Withoute scalding they hem pulle.
The stronge the feble overgoth;
But I, that were my simple cloth,
Robbe bothe robbed and robbours,
And gyle gyled and gylours.
By my treget, I gadre and threste
The greet tresour into my cheste,
That lyth with me so faste bounde.
Myn highe paleys do I founde,
And my delytes I fulfille
With wyne at feestes at my wille,
And tables fulle of entremees;
I wol no lyf, but ese and pees,
And winne gold to spende also.
For whan the grete bagge is go,
It cometh right with my lapes.
Make I not wel tumble myn apes?

To winne is alwey myn entent;
My purchas is better than my rent;
For though I shulde beten be,
Over-al I entremete me;
Withoute me may no wight dure.
I walke soules for to cure.
Of al the worlde cure have I
In brede and lengthe; boldely
I wol bothe preche and eek counceilen;
With hondis wille I not traveilen,
For of the pope I have the bulle;
I ne holde not my wittes dulle.
I wol not stinten, in my lyve,
These emperouris for to shryve,
Or kyngis, dukis, and lordis grete;
But pore folk al quyte I lete.
I love no such shryving, pardee,
But it for other cause be.
I rekke not of pore men,
Hir astate is not worth an hen.
Where fyndest thou a swinker of labour
Have me unto his confessour?
But emperesses, and duchesses,
Thise quenes, and eek [thise] countesses,
Thise abbesses, and eek Bigyns,
These grete ladyes palasyns,
These Ioly knightes, and baillyves,
Thise nonnes, and thise burgeis wyves,
That riche been, and eek plesing,
And thise maidens welfaring,
Wher-so they clad or naked be,
Uncounceiled goth ther noon fro me.
And, for her soules savetee,
At lord and lady, and hir meynee,
I axe, whan they hem to me shryve,
The propretee of al hir lyve,
And make hem trowe, bothe meest and leest,
Hir paroch-prest nis but a beest
Ayens me and my company,
That shrewis been as greet as I;
For whiche I wol not hyde in hold
No privetee that me is told,
That I by word or signe, y-wis,
[Nil] make hem knowe what it is,
And they wolen also tellen me;
They hele fro me no privitee.
And for to make yow hem perceyven,
That usen folk thus to disceyven,
I wol you seyn, withouten drede,
What men may in the gospel rede
Of Seynt Mathew, the gospelere,
That seith, as I shal you sey here.

'Upon the chaire of Moyses —
Thus is it glosed, douteles:
That is the olde testament,
For therby is the chaire ment —
Sitte Scribes and Pharisen; —
That is to seyn, the cursid men
Whiche that we ypocritis calle —
Doth that they preche, I rede you alle,
But doth not as they don a del,
That been not wery to seye wel,
But to do wel, no wille have they;
And they wolde binde on folk alwey,
That ben to [be] begyled able,
Burdens that ben importable;
On folkes shuldres thinges they couchen
That they nil with her fingres touchen.'

Amour. 'And why wol they not touche it?'

F. Sem. 'Why?
For hem ne list not, sikirly;
For sadde burdens that men taken
Make folkes shuldres aken.
And if they do ought that good be,
That is for folk it shulde see:
Her burdens larger maken they,
And make hir hemmes wyde alwey,
And loven setes at the table,
The firste and most honourable;
And for to han the first chaieris
In synagoges, to hem ful dere is;
And willen that folk hem loute and grete,
Whan that they passen thurgh the strete,
And wolen be cleped "Maister" also.
But they ne shulde not willen so;
The gospel is ther-ageyns, I gesse:
That sheweth wel hir wikkidnesse.
'Another custom use we: —
Of hem that wol ayens us be,
We hate hem deedly everichoon,
And we wol werrey hem, as oon.
Him that oon hatith, hate we alle,
And coniecte how to doon him falle.
And if we seen him winne honour,
Richesse or preys, thurgh his valour,
Provende, rent, or dignitee,
Ful fast, y-wis, compassen we
By what ladder he is clomben so;
And for to maken him doun to go,
With traisoun we wole him defame,
And doon him lese his gode name
Thus from his ladder we him take,
And thus his freendis foes we make;
But word ne wite shal he noon.

Til alle his freendis been his foon.
For if we dide it openly,
We might have blame redily;
For hadde he wist of our malyce,
He hadde him kept, but he were nyce.
'Another is this, that, if so falle
That ther be oon among us alle
That doth a good turn, out of drede,
We seyn it is our alder dede.
Ye sikerly, though he it feyned,
Or that him list, or that him deyned
A man thurgh him avaunced be;
Therof alle parceners be we,
And tellen folk, wher-so we go,
That man thurgh us is sprongen so.
And for to have of men preysing,
We purchace, thurgh our flatering,
Of riche men, of gret poustee,
Lettres to witnesse our bountee;
So that man weneth, that may us see.
That alle vertu in us be.
And alwey pore we us feyne;
But how so that we begge or pleyne,
We ben the folk, without lesing,
That al thing have without having.
Thus be we dred of the puple, y-wis.
And gladly my purpos is this: —
I dele with no wight, but he
Have gold and tresour gret plentee;
Hir acqueyntaunce wel love I;
This is moche my desyr, shortly.
I entremete me of brocages,
I make pees and mariages,
I am gladly executour,
And many tymes procuratour;
I am somtyme messager;
That falleth not to my mister.
And many tymes I make enquestes;
For me that office not honest is;
To dele with other mennes thing,
That is to me a gret lyking.
And if that ye have ought to do
In place that I repeire to,
I shal it speden thurgh my wit,
As sone as ye have told me it.
So that ye serve me to pay,
My servyse shal be your alway.
But who-so wol chastyse me,
Anoon my love lost hath he;
For I love no man in no gyse,
That wol me repreve or chastyse;
But I wolde al folk undirtake,
And of no wight no teching take;
For I, that other folk chastye,
Wol not be taught fro my folye.
'I love noon hermitage more;
All desertes, and holtes hore,
And grete wodes everichoon,
I lete hem to the Baptist Iohan.
I quethe him quyte, and him relesse
Of Egipt al the wildirnesse;
To fer were alle my mansiouns
Fro alle citees and goode tounes.
My paleis and myn hous make I
There men may renne in openly,
And sey that I the world forsake.
But al amidde I bilde and make
My hous, and swimme and pley therinne
Bet than a fish doth with his finne.
'Of Antecristes men am I,
Of whiche that Crist seith openly,
They have abit of holinesse,
And liven in such wikkednesse.
Outward, lambren semen we,
Fulle of goodnesse and of pitee,
And inward we, withouten fable,
Ben gredy wolves ravisable.
We enviroune bothe londe and see;
With al the world werreyen we;
We wol ordeyne of alle thing,
Of folkes good, and her living.
'If ther be castel or citee
Wherin that any bougerons be,
Although that they of Milayne were,
For ther-of ben they blamed there:
Or if a wight, out of mesure,
Wolde lene his gold, and take usure,
For that he is so coveitous:
Or if he be to leccherous,
Or [thefe, or] haunte simonye;
Or provost, ful of trecherye,
Or prelat, living Iolily.
Or prest that halt his quene him by;
Or olde hores hostilers,
Or other bawdes or bordillers,
Or elles blamed of any vyce,
Of whiche men shulden doon Iustyce:
By alle the seyntes that we pray,
But they defende hem with lamprey,
With luce, with elis, with samons,
With tendre gees, and with capons,
With tartes, or with cheses fat,
With deynte flawnes, brode and flat,
With caleweys, or with pullaille,
With coninges, or with fyn vitaille,
That we, undir our clothes wyde,

Maken thurgh our golet glyde:
Or but he wol do come in haste
Roo-venisoun, [y]-bake in paste:
Whether so that he loure or groine,
He shall have of a corde a loigne.
With whiche men shal him binde and lede,
To brenne him for his sinful dede,
That men shulle here him crye and rore
A myle-wey aboute and more.
Or elles he shal in prisoun dye,
But-if he wol [our] frendship bye,
Or smerten that that he hath do,
More than his gilt amounteth to.
But, and he couthe thurgh his sleight
Do maken up a tour of height,
Nought roughte I whether of stone or tree,
Or erthe, or turves though it be,
Though it were of no vounde stone,
Wrought with squyre and scantilone,
So that the tour were stuffed wel
With alle richesse temporel;
And thanne, that he wolde updresse
Engyns, bothe more and lesse,
To caste at us, by every syde —
To bere his goode name wyde —
Such sleightes [as] I shal yow nevene,
Barelles of wyne, by sixe or sevene,
Or gold in sakkes gret plente,
He shulde sone delivered be.
And if he have noon sich pitaunces,
Late him study in equipolences,
And lete lyes and fallaces,
If that he wolde deserve our graces;
Or we shal bere him such witnesse
Of sinne, and of his wrecchidnesse,
And doon his loos so wyde renne,
That al quik we shulde him brenne,
Or elles yeve him suche penaunce,
That is wel wors than the pitaunce.
'For thou shalt never, for no-thing,
Con knowen aright by her clothing
The traitours fulle of trecherye,
But thou her werkis can aspye.
And ne hadde the good keping be
Whylom of the universitee,
That kepeth the key of Cristendome,
[They] had been turmented, alle and some.
Suche been the stinking [fals] prophetis;
Nis non of hem, that good prophete is;
For they, thurgh wikked entencioun,
The yeer of the incarnacioun
A thousand and two hundred yeer,
Fyve and fifty, ferther ne ner,
Broughten a book, with sory grace,
To yeven ensample in comune place,
That seide thus, though it were fable: —
"This is the Gospel Perdurable,
That fro the Holy Goost is sent."
Wel were it worth to ben [y]-brent.
Entitled was in such manere
This book, of which I telle here.
Ther nas no wight in al Parys,
Biforn Our Lady, at parvys,
That [he] ne mighte bye the book,
To copy, if him talent took.
Ther might he see, by greet tresoun,
Ful many fals comparisoun: —
"As moche as, thurgh his grete might,
Be it of hete, or of light,
The sunne sourmounteth the mone,
That troubler is, and chaungeth sone,
And the note-kernel the shelle —
(I scorne nat that I yow telle) —
Right so, withouten any gyle,
Sourmounteth this noble Evangyle
The word of any evangelist."
And to her title they token Christ;
And many such comparisoun,
Of which I make no mencioun,
Might men in that boke finde,
Who-so coude of hem have minde.
'The universitee, that tho was aslepe,
Gan for to braide, and taken kepe;
And at the noys the heed up-caste,
Ne never sithen slepte it faste,
But up it sterte, and armes took
Ayens this fals horrible book,
Al redy bateil for to make,
And to the Iuge the book to take.
But they that broughten the book there
Hente it anoon awey, for fere;
They nolde shewe it more a del,
But thenne it kepte, and kepen wil,
Til such a tyme that they may see
That they so stronge woxen be,
That no wight may hem wel withstonde;
For by that book they durst not stonde.
Away they gonne it for to bere,
For they ne durste not answere
By exposicioun ne glose
To that that clerkis wole appose
Ayens the cursednesse, y-wis,
That in that boke writen is.

Now wot I not, ne I can not see
What maner ende that there shal be
Of al this [boke] that they hyde;
But yit algate they shal abyde
Til that they may it bet defende;
This trowe I best, wol be hir ende.
'Thus Antecrist abyden we,
For we ben alle of his meynee;
And what man that wol not be so,
Right sone he shal his lyf forgo.
We wol a puple on him areyse,
And thurgh our gyle doon him seise,
And him on sharpe speris ryve,
Or other-weyes bringe him fro lyve,
But-if that he wol folowe, y-wis,
That in our boke writen is.
Thus moche wol our book signifye,
That whyl [that] Peter hath maistrye,
May never Iohan shewe wel his might.
'Now have I you declared right
The mening of the bark and rinde
That makith the entenciouns blinde.
But now at erst I wol biginne
To expowne you the pith withinne: —
[And first, by Peter, as I wene,
The Pope himself we wolden mene],
And [eek] the seculers comprehende,
That Cristes lawe wol defende,
And shulde it kepen and mayntenen
Ayeines hem that al sustenen,
And falsly to the puple techen.
[And] Iohan bitokeneth hem [that] prechen,
That ther nis lawe covenable
But thilke Gospel Perdurable,
That fro the Holy Gost was sent
To turne folk that been miswent.
The strengthe of Iohan they undirstonde
The grace in which, they seye, they stonde,
That doth the sinful folk converte,
And hem to Iesus Crist reverte.
'Ful many another horriblete
May men in that boke see,
That ben comaunded, douteles,
Ayens the lawe of Rome expres;
And alle with Antecrist they holden,
As men may in the book biholden.
And than comaunden they to sleen
Alle tho that with Peter been;
But they shal nevere have that might,
And, god to forn, for stryf to fight,
That they ne shal y-nough [men] finde
That Peters lawe shal have in minde,
And ever holde, and so mayntene,
That at the last it shal be sene
That they shal alle come therto,
For ought that they can speke or do.
And thilke lawe shal not stonde,
That they by Iohan have undirstonde;
But, maugre hem, it shal adoun,
And been brought to confusioun.
But I wol stinte of this matere,
For it is wonder long to here;
But hadde that ilke book endured,
Of better estate I were ensured;
And freendis have I yit, pardee,
That han me set in greet degree.
'Of all this world is emperour
Gyle my fader, the trechour,
And emperesse my moder is,
Maugre the Holy Gost, y-wis.
Our mighty linage and our route
Regneth in every regne aboute;
And wel is worth we [maistres] be,
For al this world governe we,
And can the folk so wel disceyve,
That noon our gyle can perceyve;
And though they doon, they dar not saye;
The sothe dar no wight biwreye.
But he in Cristis wrath him ledeth,
That more than Crist my bretheren dredeth.
He nis no ful good champioun,
That dredith such similacioun;
Nor that for peyne wole refusen
Us to correcten and accusen.
He wol not entremete by right,
Ne have god in his eye-sight,
And therfore god shal him punyce;
But me ne rekketh of no vyce,
Sithen men us loven comunably,
And holden us for so worthy,
That we may folk repreve echoon,
And we nil have repref of noon.
Whom shulden folk worshipen so
But us, that stinten never mo
To patren whyl that folk us see,
Though it not so bihinde hem be?
'And where is more wood folye,
Than to enhaunce chivalrye,
And love noble men and gay,
That Ioly clothis weren alway?
If they be sich folk as they semen,
So clene, as men her clothis demen,

And that her wordis folowe her dede,
It is gret pite, out of drede,
For they wol be noon ypocritis!
Of hem, me thinketh [it] gret spite is;
I can not love hem on no syde.
But Beggers with these hodes wyde,
With sleighe and pale faces lene,
And greye clothis not ful clene,
But fretted ful of tatarwagges,
And highe shoes, knopped with dagges,
That frouncen lyke a quaile-pype,
Or botes riveling as a gype;
To such folk as I you devyse
Shuld princes and these lordes wyse
Take alle her londes and her thinges,
Bothe werre and pees, in governinges;
To such folk shulde a prince him yive,
That wolde his lyf in honour live.
And if they be not as they seme,
That serven thus the world to queme,
There wolde I dwelle, to disceyve
The folk, for they shal not perceyve.
'But I ne speke in no such wyse,
That men shulde humble abit dispyse,
So that no pryde ther-under be.
No man shulde hate, as thinketh me,
The pore man in sich clothing.
But god ne preiseth him no-thing,
That seith he hath the world forsake,
And hath to worldly glorie him take,
And wol of siche delyces use;
Who may that Begger wel excuse?
That papelard, that him yeldeth so,
And wol to worldly ese go,
And seith that he the world hath left,
And gredily it grypeth eft,
He is the hound, shame is to seyn,
That to his casting goth ageyn.
'But unto you dar I not lye:
But mighte I felen or aspye,
That ye perceyved it no-thing,
Ye shulden have a stark lesing
Right in your hond thus, to biginne,
I nolde it lette for no sinne.'
The god lough at the wonder tho,
And every wight gan laughe also,
And seide:—'Lo here a man aright
For to be trusty to every wight!'
'Fals Semblant,' quod Love, 'sey to me,
Sith I thus have avaunced thee,
That in my court is thy dwelling,
And of ribaudes shalt be my king,
Wolt thou wel holden my forwardis?'
F. Sem. 'Ye, sir, from hennes forewardis;
Hadde never your fader herebiforn
Servaunt so trewe, sith he was born.'
Amour. 'That is ayeines al nature.'
F. Sem. 'Sir, put you in that aventure;
For though ye borowes take of me,
The sikerer shal ye never be
For ostages, ne sikirnesse,
Or chartres, for to bere witnesse.
I take your-self to record here,
That men ne may, in no manere,
Teren the wolf out of his hyde,
Til he be [flayn], bak and syde,
Though men him bete and al defyle;
What? wene ye that I wole bigyle?
For I am clothed mekely,
Ther-under is al my trechery;
Myn herte chaungeth never the mo
For noon abit, in which I go.
Though I have chere of simplenesse,
I am not wery of shrewednesse.
My lemman, Streyned-Abstinence,
Hath mister of my purveaunce;
She hadde ful longe ago be deed,
Nere my councel and my reed;
Lete hir allone, and you and me.'
And Love answerde, 'I truste thee
Withoute borowe, for I wol noon.'
And Fals-Semblant, the theef, anoon,
Right in that ilke same place,
That hadde of tresoun al his face
Right blak withinne, and whyt without,
Thanketh him, gan on his knees loute.
Than was ther nought, but 'Every man
Now to assaut, that sailen can,'
Quod Love, 'and that ful hardily.'
Than armed they hem communly
Of sich armour as to hem fel.
Whan they were armed, fers and fel,
They wente hem forth, alle in a route,
And set the castel al aboute;
They wil nought away, for no drede,
Til it so be that they ben dede,
Or til they have the castel take.
And foure batels they gan make,
And parted hem in foure anoon,
And toke her way, and forth they goon,
The foure gates for to assaile,
Of whiche the kepers wol not faile;
For they ben neither syke ne dede,

But hardy folk, and stronge in dede.
Now wole I seyn the countenaunce
Of Fals-Semblant, and Abstinaunce,
That ben to Wikkid-Tonge went.
But first they helde her parlement,
Whether it to done were
To maken hem be knowen there,
Or elles walken forth disgysed.
But at the laste they devysed,
That they wold goon in tapinage,
As it were in a pilgrimage,
Lyk good and holy folk unfeyned.
And Dame Abstinence-Streyned
Took on a robe of camelyne,
And gan hir graithe as a Begyne.
A large coverchief of threde
She wrapped al aboute hir hede,
But she forgat not hir sautere;
A peire of bedis eek she bere
Upon a lace, al of whyt threde,
On which that she hir bedes bede;
But she ne boughte hem never a del,
For they were geven her, I wot wel,
God wot, of a ful holy frere,
That seide he was hir fader dere,
To whom she hadde ofter went
Than any frere of his covent.
And he visyted hir also,
And many a sermoun seide hir to;
He nolde lette, for man on lyve,
That he ne wolde hir ofte shryve.
And with so gret devocion
They maden her confession,
That they had ofte, for the nones,
Two hedes in one hood at ones.
Of fair shape I devyse her thee,
But pale of face somtyme was she;
That false traitouresse untrewe
Was lyk that salowe hors of hewe,
That in the Apocalips is shewed,
That signifyeth tho folk beshrewed,
That been al ful of trecherye,
And pale, thurgh hypocrisye;
For on that hors no colour is,
But only deed and pale, y-wis.
Of suche a colour enlangoured
Was Abstinence, y-wis, coloured;
Of her estat she her repented,
As her visage represented.
She had a burdoun al of Thefte,
That Gyle had yeve her of his yefte;
And a scrippe of Fainte Distresse,
That ful was of elengenesse,
And forth she walked sobrely:
And False-Semblant saynt, *ie vous die*,
[Had], as it were for such mistere,
Don on the cope of a frere,
With chere simple, and ful pitous;
His looking was not disdeinous,
Ne proud, but meke and ful pesible.
About his nekke he bar a bible,
And squierly forth gan he gon;
And, for to reste his limmes upon,
He had of Treson a potente;
As he were feble, his way he wente.
But in his sleve he gan to thringe
A rasour sharp, and wel bytinge,
That was forged in a forge,
Which that men clepen Coupegorge.
So longe forth hir way they nomen,
Til they to Wicked-Tonge comen,
That at his gate was sitting,
And saw folk in the way passing.
The pilgrimes saw he faste by,
That beren hem fel mekely,
And humblely they with him mette.
Dame Abstinence first him grette,
And sith him False-Semblant salued,
And he hem; but he not remued,
For he ne dredde hem not a-del.
For when he saw hir faces wel,
Alway in herte him thoughte so,
He shulde knowe hem bothe two;
For wel he knew Dame Abstinaunce,
But he ne knew not Constreynaunce.
He knew nat that she was constrayned,
Ne of her theves lyfe feyned,
But wende she com of wil al free;
But she com in another degree;
And if of good wil she began,
That wil was failed her [as] than.
And Fals-Semblant had he seyn als,
But he knew nat that he was fals.
Yet fals was he, but his falsnesse
Ne coude he not espye, nor gesse;
For semblant was so slye wrought,
That falsnesse he ne espyed nought.
But haddest thou knowen him beforn,
Thou woldest on a boke have sworn,
Whan thou him saugh in thilke aray
That he, that whylom was so gay,
And of the daunce Ioly Robin,
Was tho become a Iacobin.
But sothely, what so men him calle,
Freres Prechours been good men alle;
Hir order wickedly they beren,

Suche minstrelles if [that] they weren.
So been Augustins and Cordileres,
And Carmes, and eek Sakked Freres,
And alle freres, shodde and bare,
(Though some of hem ben grete and square)
Ful holy men, as I hem deme;
Everich of hem wolde good man seme.
But shalt thou never of apparence
Seen conclude good consequence
In none argument, y-wis,
If existence al failed is.
For men may finde alway sophyme
The consequence to envenyme,
Who-so that hath the subteltee
The double sentence for to see.
Whan the pilgrymes commen were
To Wicked-Tonge, that dwelled there,
Hir harneis nigh hem was algate;
By Wicked-Tonge adoun they sate,
That bad hem ner him for to come,
And of tydinges telle him some,
And sayde hem: 'What cas maketh yow
To come into this place now?'
'Sir,' seyde Strained-Abstinaunce,
'We, for to drye our penaunce,
With hertes pitous and devoute,
Are commen, as pilgrimes gon aboute;
Wel nigh on fote alway we go;
Ful dusty been our heles two;
And thus bothe we ben sent
Thurghout this world that is miswent,
To yeve ensample, and preche also.
To fisshen sinful men we go,
For other fisshing ne fisshe we.
And, sir, for that charitee,
As we be wont, herberwe we crave,
Your lyf to amende; Crist it save!
And, so it shulde you nat displese,
We wolden, if it were your ese,
A short sermoun unto you seyn.'
And Wikked-Tonge answerde ageyn,
'The hous,' quod he, 'such as ye see,
Shal nat be warned you for me,
Sey what you list, and I wol here.'
'Graunt mercy, swete sire dere!'
Quod alderfirst Dame Abstinence,
And thus began she hir sentence:
Const. Abstinence. 'Sir, the first vertue, certeyn,
The gretest, and most sovereyn
That may be founde in any man,
For having, or for wit he can,
That is, his tonge to refreyne;
Therto ought every wight him peyne.
For it is better stille be
Than for to speken harm, pardee!
And he that herkeneth it gladly,
He is no good man, sikerly.
And, sir, aboven al other sinne,
In that art thou most gilty inne.
Thou spake a Iape not long ago,
(And, sir, that was right yvel do)
Of a yong man that here repaired,
And never yet this place apaired.
Thou seydest he awaited nothing
But to disceyve Fair-Welcoming.
Ye seyde nothing sooth of that;
But, sir, ye lye; I tell you plat;
He ne cometh no more, ne goth, pardee!
I trow ye shal him never see.
Fair-Welcoming in prison is,
That ofte hath pleyed with you, er this,
The fairest games that he coude,
Withoute filthe, stille or loude;
Now dar [he] nat [him]self solace.
Ye han also the man do chace,
That he dar neither come ne go.
What meveth you to hate him so
But properly your wikked thought,
That many a fals lesing hath thought?
That meveth your foole eloquence,
That iangleth ever in audience,
And on the folk areyseth blame,
And doth hem dishonour and shame,
For thing that may have no preving,
But lyklinesse, and contriving.
For I dar seyn, that Reson demeth,
It is not al sooth thing that semeth,
And it is sinne to controve
Thing that is [for] to reprove;
This wot ye wel; and, sir, therefore
Ye arn to blame [wel] the more.
And, nathelesse, he rekketh lyte;
He yeveth nat now thereof a myte;
For if he thoughte harm, parfay,
He wolde come and gon al day;
He coude him-selfe nat abstene.
Now cometh he nat, and that is sene,
For he ne taketh of it no cure,
But-if it be through aventure,
And lasse than other folk, algate.
And thou here watchest at the gate,
With spere in thyne arest alway;
There muse, musard, al the day.

Thou wakest night and day for thought;
Y-wis, thy traveyl is for nought.
And Ielousye, withouten faile,
Shal never quyte thee thy travaile.
And scathe is, that Fair-Welcoming,
Withouten any trespassing,
Shal wrongfully in prison be,
Ther wepeth and languissheth he.
And though thou never yet, y-wis,
Agiltest man no more but this,
(Take not a-greef) it were worthy
To putte thee out of this baily,
And afterward in prison lye,
And fettre thee til that thou dye;
For thou shalt for this sinne dwelle
Right in the devils ers of helle,
But-if that thou repente thee.'
'Ma fay, thou lyest falsly!' quod he.
'What? welcome with mischaunce now!
Have I therfore herbered you
To seye me shame, and eek reprove?
With sory happe, to your bihove,
Am I to-day your herbergere!
Go, herber you elleswhere than here,
That han a lyer called me!
Two tregetours art thou and he,
That in myn hous do me this shame,
And for my soth-sawe ye me blame.
Is this the sermoun that ye make?
To alle the develles I me take,
Or elles, god, thou me confounde!
But er men diden this castel founde,
It passeth not ten dayes or twelve,
But it was told right to my-selve,
And as they seide, right so tolde I,
He kiste the Rose privily!
Thus seide I now, and have seid yore;
I not wher he dide any more.
Why shulde men sey me such a thing,
If it hadde been gabbing?
Right so seide I, and wol seye yit;
I trowe, I lyed not of it;
And with my bemes I wol blowe
To alle neighboris a-rowe,
How he hath bothe comen and gon.'
Tho spak Fals-Semblant right anon,
'Al is not gospel, out of doute,
That men seyn in the toune aboute;
Ley no deef ere to my speking;
I swere yow, sir, it is gabbing!
I trowe ye wot wel certeynly,
That no man loveth him tenderly
That seith him harm, if he wot it,
Al be he never so pore of wit.
And sooth is also sikerly,
(This knowe ye, sir, as wel as I),
That lovers gladly wol visyten
The places ther hir loves habyten.
This man you loveth and eek honoureth;
This man to serve you laboureth;
And clepeth you his freend so dere,
And this man maketh you good chere,
And every-wher that [he] you meteth,
He you saleweth, and he you greteth.
He preseth not so ofte, that ye
Ought of his come encombred be;
Ther presen other folk on yow
Ful ofter than [that] he doth now.
And if his herte him streyned so
Unto the Rose for to go,
Ye shulde him seen so ofte nede,
That ye shulde take him with the dede.
He coude his coming not forbere,
Though ye him thrilled with a spere;
It nere not thanne as it is now.
But trusteth wel, I swere it yow,
That it is clene out of his thought.
Sir, certes, he ne thenketh it nought;
No more ne doth Fair-Welcoming,
That sore abyeth al this thing.
And if they were of oon assent,
Ful sone were the Rose hent;
The maugre youres wolde be.
And sir, of o thing herkeneth me:—
Sith ye this man, that loveth yow,
Han seid such harm and shame now,
Witeth wel, if he gessed it,
Ye may wel demen in your wit,
He nolde no-thing love you so,
Ne callen you his freend also,
But night and day he [wolde] wake,
The castel to destroye and take,
If it were sooth as ye devyse;
Or som man in som maner wyse
Might it warne him everydel
Or by him-self perceyven wel;
For sith he might not come and gon
As he was whylom wont to don,
He might it sone wite and see;
But now al other-wyse [doth] he.
Than have [ye], sir, al-outerly
Deserved helle, and Iolyly
The deth of helle, douteles,
That thrallen folk so gilteles.'
Fals-Semblant proveth so this thing

That he can noon answering,
And seeth alwey such apparaunce,
That nygh he fel in repentaunce,
And seide him: — 'Sir, it may wel be.
Semblant, a good man semen ye;
And, Abstinence, ful wyse ye seme;
Of o talent you bothe I deme.
What counceil wole ye to me yeven?'
F. Sem. 'Right here anoon thou shalt be shriven,
And sey thy sinne withoute more;
Of this shalt thou repente sore;
For I am preest, and have poustee
To shryve folk of most dignitee
That been, as wyde as world may dure.
Of al this world I have the cure,
And that had never yit persoun,
No vicarie of no maner toun.
And, god wot, I have of thee
A thousand tymes more pitee
Than hath thy preest parochial,
Though he thy freend be special.
I have avauntage, in o wyse,
That your prelates ben not so wyse
Ne half so lettred as am I.
I am licenced boldely
In divinitee to rede,
And to confessen, out of drede.
If ye wol you now confesse,
And leve your sinnes more and lesse,
Without abood, knele doun anon,
And you shal have absolucion.'

Explicit.

THE MINOR POEMS.

I. AN A. B. C.

Incipit carmen secundum ordinem literarum Alphabeti.

ALMIGHTY and al merciable quene,
To whom that al this world fleeth for socour,
To have relees of sinne, sorwe and tene,
Glorious virgine, of alle floures flour,
To thee I flee, confounded in errour! 5
Help and releve. thou mighty debonaire,
Have mercy on my perilous langour!
Venquisshed me hath my cruel adversaire.

Bountee so fix hath in thyn herte his tente,
That wel I wot thou wolt my socour be, 10
Thou canst not warne him that, with good entente,
Axeth thyn help. Thyn herte is ay so free,
Thou art largesse of pleyn felicitee,
Haven of refut, of quiete and of reste.
Lo, how that theves seven chasen me! 15
Help, lady bright, er that my ship tobreste!

Comfort is noon, but in yow, lady dere
For lo, my sinne and my confusioun,
Which oughten not in thy presence appere,
Han take on me a grevous accioun 20
Of verrey right and desperacioun;
And, as by right, they mighten wel sustene
That I were worthy my dampnacioun,
Nere mercy of you, blisful hevene quene.

Doute is ther noon, thou queen of misericorde, 25
That thou nart cause of grace and mercy here;
God vouched sauf thurgh thee with us tacorde.
For certes, Cristes blisful moder dere,
Were now the bowe bent in swich manere,
As it was first, of Iustice and of yre, 30
The rightful God nolde of no mercy here;
But thurgh thee han we grace, as we desyre.

Ever hath myn hope of refut been in thee,
For heer-biforn ful ofte, in many a wyse,
Hast thou to misericorde receyved me.
But mercy, lady, at the grete assyse, 36
Whan we shul come bifore the hye Iustyse!
So litel fruit shal thanne in me be founde,
That, but thou er that day me wel chastyse,
Of verrey right my werk me wol confounde. 40

Fleeing, I flee for socour to thy tente
Me for to hyde from tempest ful of drede,
Biseching you that ye you not absente,
Though I be wikke. O help yit at this nede! 44
Al have I been a beste in wille and dede,
Yit, lady, thou me clothe with thy grace.
Thyn enemy and myn — lady, tak hede,
Un-to my deth in poynt is me to chace.

Glorious mayde and moder, which that never 49
Were bitter, neither in erthe nor in see,
But ful of swetenesse and of mercy ever,
Help that my fader be not wroth with me!
Spek thou, for I ne dar not him y-see.
So have I doon in erthe, allas ther-whyle!
That certes, but-if thou my socour be, 55
To stink eterne he wol my gost exyle.

He vouched sauf, tel him, as was his wille,
Bicome a man, to have our alliaunce,
And with his precious blood he wroot the bille
Up-on the crois, as general acquitaunce,
To every penitent in ful creaunce;
And therfor, lady bright, thou for us praye.
Than shalt thou bothe stinte al his grevaunce,
And make our foo to failen of his praye.

I wot it wel, thou wolt ben our socour,
Thou art so ful of bountee, in certeyn.
For, whan a soule falleth in errour,
Thy pitee goth and haleth him ayeyn.
Than makest thou his pees with his sovereyn,
And bringest him out of the crooked strete.
Who-so thee loveth he shal not love in veyn,
That shal he finde, as he the lyf shal lete.

Kalenderes enlumined ben they
That in this world ben lighted with thy name,
And who-so goth to you the righte wey,
Him thar not drede in soule to be lame.
Now, queen of comfort, sith thou art that same
To whom I seche for my medicyne,
Lat not my foo no more my wounde entame,
Myn hele in-to thyn hand al I resigne.

Lady, thy sorwe can I not portreye
Under the cros, ne his grevous penaunce.
But, for your bothes peynes, I you preye,
Lat not our alder foo make his bobaunce,
That he hath in his listes of mischaunce
Convict that ye bothe have bought so dere.
As I seide erst, thou ground of our substaunce.
Continue on us thy pitous eyen clere!

Moises, that saugh the bush with flaumes rede
Brenninge, of which ther never a stikke brende,
Was signe of thyn unwemmed maidenhede.
Thou art the bush on which ther gan descende
The Holy Gost, the which that Moises wende
Had ben a-fyr; and this was in figure.
Now lady, from the fyr thou us defende
Which that in helle eternally shal dure.

Noble princesse, that never haddest pere,
Certes, if any comfort in us be,
That cometh of thee, thou Cristes moder dere,
We han non other melodye or glee
Us to reloyse in our adversitee,
Ne advocat noon that wol and dar so preye
For us, and that for litel hyre as ye,
That helpen for an Ave-Marie or tweye.

O verrey light of eyen that ben blinde,
O verrey lust of labour and distresse,
O tresorere of bountee to mankinde,
Thee whom God chees to moder for humblesse!
From his ancille he made thee maistresse
Of hevene and erthe, our bille up for to bede.
This world awaiteth ever on thy goodnesse,
For thou ne failest never wight at nede.

Purpos I have sum tyme for tenquere,
Wherfore and why the Holy Gost thee soughte,
Whan Gabrielles vois cam to thyn ere.
He not to werre us swich a wonder wroughte,
But for to save us that he sithen boughte.
Than nedeth us no wepen us for to save,
But only ther we did not, as us oughte,
Do penitence, and mercy axe and have.

Queen of comfort, yit whan I me bithinke
That I agilt have bothe, him and thee,
And that my soule is worthy for to sinke,
Allas, I, caitif, whider may I flee?
Who shal un-to thy sone my mene be?
Who, but thy-self, that art of pitee welle?
Thou hast more reuthe on our adversitee
Than in this world mighte any tunge telle.

Redresse me, moder, and me chastyse,
For, certeynly, my fadres chastisinge 130
That dar I nought abyden in no wyse:
So hidous is his rightful rekeninge.
Moder, of whom our mercy gan to springe,
Beth ye my Iuge and eek my soules leche;
For ever in you is pitee haboundinge
To ech that wol of pitee you biseche.

Soth is, that God ne graunteth no pitee
With-oute thee; for God, of his goodnesse,
Foryiveth noon, but it lyke un-to thee.
He hath thee maked vicaire and maistresse 140
Of al the world, and eek governeresse
Of hevene, and he represseth his Iustyse
After thy wille, and therefore in witnesse
He hath thee crouned in so ryal wise.

Temple devout, ther god hath his woninge, 145
Fro which these misbileved pryved been,
To you my soule penitent I bringe.
Receyve me! I can no ferther fleen!
With thornes venimous, O hevene queen,
For which the erthe acursed was ful yore,
I am so wounded, as ye may wel seen, 151
That I am lost almost; — it smert so sore.

Virgine, that art so noble of apparaile,
And ledest us in-to the hye tour
Of Paradys, thou me wisse and counsaile,
How I may have thy grace and thy socour; 156
Al have I been in filthe and in errour.
Lady, un-to that court thou me aiourne
That cleped is thy bench, O fresshe flour!
Ther-as that mercy ever shal soiourne. 160

Xristus, thy sone, that in this world alighte,
Up-on the cros to suffre his passioun,
And eek, that Longius his herte pighte,
And made his herte blood to renne adoun;
And al was this for my salvacioun; 165
And I to him am fals and eek unkinde,
And yit he wol not my dampnacioun —
This thanke I you, socour of al mankinde.

Ysaac was figure of his deeth, certeyn,
That so fer-forth his fader wolde obeye
That him ne roughte no-thing to be slayn;
Right so thy sone list, as a lamb, to deye.
Now lady, ful of mercy, I you preye,
Sith he his mercy mesured so large,
Be ye not skant; for alle we singe and seye 175
That ye ben from vengeaunce ay our targe.

Zacharie you clepeth the open welle
To wasshe sinful soule out of his gilt.
Therfore this lessoun oughte I wel to telle
That, nere thy tender herte, we weren spilt. 180
Now lady brighte, sith thou canst and wilt
Ben to the seed of Adam merciable,
So bring us to that palais that is bilt
To penitents that ben to mercy able.
Amen.

Explicit carmen.

II. THE COMPLEYNTE UNTO PITE.

Pite, that I have sought so yore ago,
With herte sore, and ful of besy peyne,
That in this world was never wight so wo
With-oute dethe; and, if I shal not feyne
My purpos was, to Pite to compleyne 5
Upon the crueltee and tirannye
Of Love, that for my trouthe doth me dye.

And when that I, by lengthe of certeyn yeres,
Had ever in oon a tyme sought to speke,
To Pite ran I, al bespreynt with teres, 10
To preyen hir on Crueltee me awreke.
But, er I might with any worde out-breke,
Or tellen any of my peynes smerte,
I fond hir deed, and buried in an herte.

Adoun I fel, when that I saugh the herse,
Deed as a stoon, whyl that the swogh me laste; 16

But up I roos, with colour ful diverse,
And pitously on hir myn yën caste,
And ner the corps I gan to presen faste,
And for the soule I shoop me for to preye;
I nas but lorn; ther nas no more to seye.

Thus am I slayn, sith that Pite is deed;
Allas! that day! that ever hit shulde falle!
What maner man dar now holde up his heed?
To whom shal any sorwful herte calle?
Now Crueltee hath cast to sleen us alle,
In ydel hope, folk redelees of peyne—
Sith she is deed—to whom shul we compleyne?

But yet encreseth me this wonder newe,
That no wight woot that she is deed, but I;
So many men as in hir tyme hir knewe,
And yet she dyed not so sodeynly;
For I have sought hir ever ful besily
Sith first I hadde wit or mannes mynde;
But she was deed, er that I coude hir fynde.

Aboute hir herse ther stoden lustily,
Withouten any wo, as thoughte me,
Bountee parfit, wel armed and richely,
And fresshe Beautee, Lust, and Jolitee,
Assured Maner, Youthe, and Honestee,
Wisdom, Estaat, [and] Dreed, and Governaunce,
Confedred bothe by bonde and alliaunce.

A compleynt hadde I, writen, in myn hond,
For to have put to Pite as a bille,
But whan I al this companye ther fond,
That rather wolden al my cause spille
Than do me help, I held my pleynte stille;
For to that folk, withouten any faile,
Withoute Pite may no bille availe.

Then leve I al thise virtues, sauf Pite,
Keping the corps, as ye have herd me seyn,
Confedred alle by bonde of Crueltee,
And been assented that I shal be sleyn.
And I have put my compleynt up ageyn;
For to my foos my bille I dar not shewe,
Theffect of which seith thus, in wordes fewe:—

The Bille

¶ 'Humblest of herte, hyest of reverence,
Benigne flour, coroune of vertues alle,
Sheweth unto your rial excellence
Your servaunt, if I durste me so calle,
His mortal harm, in which he is y-falle,
And noght al only for his evel fare,
But for your renoun, as he shal declare.

'Hit stondeth thus: your contraire, Crueltee,
Allyed is ageynst your regalye
Under colour of womanly Beautee.
For men [ne] shuld not knowe hir tirannye,
With Bountee, Gentilesse, and Curtesye,
And hath depryved you now of your place
That hight "Beautee, apertenant to Grace."

'For kyndly, by your heritage right,
Ye been annexed ever unto Bountee;
And verrayly ye oughte do your might
To helpe Trouthe in his adversitee.
Ye been also the coroune of Beautee;
And certes, if ye wanten in thise tweyne,
The world is lore; ther nis no more to seyne.

¶ 'Eek what availeth Maner and Gentilesse
Withoute you, benigne creature?
Shal Crueltee be your governeresse?
Allas! what herte may hit longe endure?
Wherfor, but ye the rather take cure
To breke that perilous alliaunce,
Ye sleen hem that ben in your obeisaunce.

'And further over, if ye suffre this,
Your renoun is fordo than in a throwe;
Ther shal no man wite wel what Pite is.
Allas! that your renoun shuld be so lowe!
Ye be than fro your heritage y-throwe
By Crueltee, that occupieth your place;
And we despeired, that seken to your grace.

'Have mercy on me, thou Herenus quene,
That you have sought so tenderly and yore;
Let som streem of your light on me be sene
That love and drede you, ay lenger the more.
For, sothly for to seyne, I bere the sore,
And, though I be not cunning for to pleyne,
For goddes love, have mercy on my peyne!

¶ 'My peyne is this, that what so I desire
That have I not, ne no-thing lyk therto;
And ever set Desire myn herte on fire;
Eek on that other syde, wher-so I go,
What maner thing that may encrese wo
That have I redy, unsoght, everywhere;
Me [ne] lakketh but my deth, and than my bere.

'What nedeth to shewe parcel of my peyne?
Sith every wo that herte may bethinke
I suffre, and yet I dar not to you pleyne;
For wel I woot, al-though I wake or winke,
Ye rekke not whether I flete or sinke.
But natheles, my trouthe I shal sustene
Unto my deth, and that shal wel be sene.

'This is to seyne, I wol be youres ever;
Though ye me slee by Crueltee, your fo,
Algate my spirit shal never dissever
Fro your servyse, for any peyne or wo.
Sith ye be deed—allas! that hit is so!—
Thus for your deth I may wel wepe and pleyne
With herte sore and ful of besy peyne.'

Here endeth the exclamacion of the Deth of Pyte.

III. THE BOOK OF THE DUCHESSE.

The Proem.

I HAVE gret wonder, by this lighte,
How that I live, for day ne nighte
I may nat slepe wel nigh noght;
I have so many an ydel thoght
Purely for defaute of slepe,
That, by my trouthe, I take kepe
Of no-thing, how hit cometh or goth,
Ne me nis no-thing leef nor loth.
Al is y-liche good to me—
Ioye or sorowe, wherso hit be—
For I have feling in no-thing,
But, as it were, a mased thing,
Alway in point to falle a-doun;
For [sory] imaginacioun
Is alway hoolly in my minde.
And wel ye wite, agaynes kinde
Hit were to liven in this wyse;
For nature wolde nat suffyse
To noon erthely creature
Not longe tyme to endure
Withoute slepe, and been in sorwe;
And I ne may, ne night ne morwe,
Slepe; and thus melancolye,
And dreed I have for to dye,
Defaute of slepe, and hevinesse
Hath sleyn my spirit of quiknesse,
That I have lost al lustihede.
Suche fantasyes ben in myn hede
So I not what is best to do.
But men mighte axe me, why so
I may not slepe, and what me is?
But natheles, who aske this
Leseth his asking trewely.
My-selven can not telle why
The sooth; but trewely, as I gesse,
I holdë hit be a siknesse
That I have suffred this eight yere,
And yet my bote is never the nere;
For ther is phisicien but oon,
That may me hele; but that is doon.
Passe we over until eft;
That wil not be, moot nede be left;
Our first matere is good to kepe.
So whan I saw I might not slepe,
Til now late, this other night,
Upon my bedde I sat upright,
And bad oon reche me a book,
A romaunce, and he hit me took

To rede and dryve the night away;
For me thoghte it better play
Then playen either at chesse or tables.
And in this boke were writen fables
That clerkes hadde, in olde tyme,
And other poets, put in ryme
To rede, and for to be in minde
Whyl men loved the lawe of kinde.
This book ne spak but of such thinges,
Of quenes lyves, and of kinges,
And many othere thinges smale.
Amonge al this I fond a tale
That me thoughte a wonder thing.
This was the tale: Ther was a king
That highte Seys, and hadde a wyf,
The beste that mighte bere lyf;
And this quene highte Alcyone.
So hit befel, therafter sone,
This king wolde wenden over see.
To tellen shortly, whan that he
Was in the see, thus in this wyse,
Soche a tempest gan to ryse
That brak hir mast, and made it falle,
And clefte hir ship, and dreinte hem alle,
That never was founden, as it telles,
Bord ne man, ne nothing elles.
Right thus this king Seys loste his lyf.
Now for to speken of his wyf:—
This lady, that was left at home,
Hath wonder, that the king ne come
Hoom, for hit was a longe terme.
Anon her herte gan to erme;
And for that hir thoughte evermo
Hit was not wel [he dwelte] so,
She longed so after the king
That certes, hit were a pitous thing
To telle hir hertely sorwful lyf
That hadde, alas! this noble wyf;
For him she loved alderbest.
Anon she sente bothe eest and west
To seke him, but they founde nought.
'Alas!' quoth she, 'that I was wrought!
And wher my lord, my love, be deed?
Certes, I nil never ete breed,
I make a-vowe to my god here,
But I mowe of my lorde here!'
Such sorwe this lady to her took
That trewely I, which made this book,
Had swich pite and swich rowthe
To rede hir sorwe, that, by my trowthe,
I ferde the worse al the morwe
After, to thenken on her sorwe.
So whan [she] coude here no word
That no man mighte fynde hir lord,
Ful oft she swouned, and seide 'alas!'
For sorwe ful nigh wood she was,
Ne she coude no reed but oon;
But doun on knees she sat anoon,
And weep, that pite was to here.
'A! mercy! swete lady dere!'
Quod she to Iuno, hir goddesse;
'Help me out of this distresse,
And yeve me grace my lord to see
Sone, or wite wher-so he be,
Or how he fareth, or in what wyse,
And I shal make you sacrifyse,
And holly youres become I shal
With good wil, body, herte, and al;
And but thou wilt this, lady swete,
Send me grace to slepe, and mete
In my slepe som certeyn sweven,
Wher-through that I may knowen even
Whether my lord be quik or deed.'
With that word she heng doun the heed,
And fil a-swown as cold as ston;
Hir wõmen caughte her up anon,
And broghten hir in bed al naked,
And she, forweped and forwaked,
Was wery, and thus the dede sleep
Fil on her, or she toke keep,
Through Iuno, that had herd hir bone,
That made hir [for]to slepe sone;
For as she prayde, so was don,
In dede; for Iuno, right anon,
Called thus her messagere
To do her erande, and he com nere.
Whan he was come, she bad him thus:
'Go bet,' quod Iuno, 'to Morpheus,
Thou knowest him wel, the god of sleep;
Now understond wel, and tak keep.
Sey thus on my halfe, that he
Go faste into the grete see,
And bid him that, on alle thing,
He take up Seys body the king,
That lyth ful pale and no-thing rody.
Bid him crepe into the body,
And do it goon to Alcyone
The quene, ther she lyth alone,
And shewe hir shortly, hit is no nay,
How hit was dreynt this other day;
And do the body speke so
Right as hit was wont to do,
The whyles that hit was on lyve.
Go now faste, and hy thee blyve!'
This messager took leve and wente
Upon his wey, and never ne stente

Til he com to the derke valeye
That stant bytwene roches tweye,
Ther never yet grew corn ne gras,
Ne tree, ne nothing that ought was,
Beste, ne man, ne nothing elles,
Save ther were a fewe welles
Came renning fro the cliffes adoun,
That made a deedly sleping soun,
And ronnen doun right by a cave
That was under a rokke y-grave
Amid the valey, wonder depe.
Ther thise goddes laye and slepe,
Morpheus, and Eclympasteyre,
That was the god of slepes heyre,
That slepe and did non other werk.
This cave was also as derk
As helle pit over-al aboute;
They had good leyser for to route
To envye, who might slepe beste;
Some henge hir chin upon hir breste
And slepe upright, hir heed y-hed,
And some laye naked in hir bed,
And slepe whyles the dayes laste.
This messager com flying faste,
And cryed, 'O ho! awak anon!'
Hit was for noght; ther herde him non.
'Awak!' quod he, 'who is, lyth there?'
And blew his horn right in hir ere,
And cryed 'awaketh!' wonder hyë.
This god of slepe, with his oon yë
Cast up, axed, 'who clepeth there?'
'Hit am I,' quod this messagere;
'Iuno bad thou shuldest goon'—
And tolde him what he shulde doon
As I have told yow here-tofore;
Hit is no need reherse hit more;
And wente his wey, whan he had sayd.
Anon this god of slepe a-brayd
Out of his slepe, and gan to goon,
And did as he had bede him doon;
Took up the dreynte body sone,
And bar hit forth to Alcyone,
His wyf the quene, ther-as she lay,
Right even a quarter before day,
And stood right at hir beddes fete,
And called hir, right as she hete,
By name, and seyde, 'my swete wyf,
Awak! let be your sorwful lyf!
For in your sorwe ther lyth no reed;
For certes, swete, I nam but deed;
Ye shul me never on lyve y-see.
But good swete herte, [look] that ye
Bury my body, [at whiche] a tyde
Ye mowe hit finde the see besyde;
And far-wel, swete, my worldes blisse!
I praye god your sorwe lisse;
To litel whyl our blisse lasteth!'
With that hir eyen up she casteth,
And saw noght; '[A]!' quod she, 'for sorwe!'
And deyed within the thridde morwe.
But what she sayde more in that swow
I may not telle yow as now,
Hit were to longe for to dwelle;
My first matere I wil yow telle,
Wherfor I have told this thing
Of Alcione and Seys the king.
For thus moche dar I saye wel,
I had be dolven everydel,
And deed, right through defaute of sleep,
If I nad red and taken keep
Of this tale next before:
And I wol telle yow wherfore;
For I ne might, for bote ne bale,
Slepe, or I had red this tale
Of this dreynte Seys the king,
And of the goddes of sleping.
Whan I had red this tale wel,
And over-loked hit everydel,
Me thoughte wonder if hit were so;
For I had never herd speke, or tho,
Of no goddes that coude make
Men [for] to slepe, ne for to wake;
For I ne knew never god but oon.
And in my game I sayde anoon—
And yet me list right evel to pleye—
'Rather then that I shulde deye
Through defaute of sleping thus,
I wolde yive thilke Morpheus,
Or his goddesse, dame Iuno,
Or som wight elles, I ne roghte who—
To make me slepe and have som reste—
I wil yive him the alder-beste
Yift that ever he abood his lyve,
And here on warde, right now, as blyve;
If he wol make me slepe a lyte,
Of downe of pure dowves whyte
I wil yive him a fether-bed,
Rayed with golde, and right wel cled
In fyn blak satin doutremere,
And many a pilow, and every bere
Of clothe of Reynes, to slepe softe;
Him thar not nede to turnen ofte.
And I wol yive him al that falles
To a chambre; and al his halles
I wol do peynte with pure golde,

And tapite hem ful many folde
Of oo suite; this shal he have,
If I wiste wher were his cave,
If he can make me slepe sone,
As did the goddesse Alcione.
And thus this ilke god, Morpheus,
May winne of me mo feës thus
Than ever he wan; and to Iuno,
That is his goddesse, I shal so do,
I trow that she shal holde her payd.'
I hadde unneth that word y-sayd
Right thus as I have told hit yow,
That sodeynly, I niste how,
Swich a lust anoon me took
To slepe, that right upon my book
I fil aslepe, and therwith even
Me mette so inly swete a sweven,
So wonderful, that never yit
I trowe no man hadde the wit
To conne wel my sweven rede;
No, not Ioseph, withoute drede,
Of Egipte, he that rede so
The kinges meting Pharao,
No more than coude the leste of us;
Ne nat scarsly Macrobeus,
(He that wroot al thavisioun
That he mette, king Scipioun,
The noble man, the African —
Swiche mervayles fortuned than)
I trowe, a-rede my dremes even.
Lo, thus hit was, this was my sweven.

The Dream.

Me thoughte thus: — that hit was May,
And in the dawning ther I lay,
Me mette thus, in my bed al naked: —
[I] loked forth, for I was waked
With smale foules a gret hepe,
That had affrayed me out of slepe
Through noyse and swetnesse of hir song;
And, as me mette, they sate among,
Upon my chambre-roof withoute,
Upon the tyles, al a-boute,
And songen, everich in his wyse,
The moste solempne servyse
By note, that ever man, I trowe,
Had herd; for som of hem song lowe,
Som hye, and al of oon acorde.
To telle shortly, at oo worde,
Was never y-herd so swete a steven,
But hit had be a thing of heven; —
So mery a soun, so swete entunes,
That certes, for the toune of Tewnes,
I nolde but I had herd hem singe,
For al my chambre gan to ringe
Through singing of hir armonye.
For instrument nor melodye
Was nowher herd yet half so swete,
Nor of acorde half so mete;
For ther was noon of hem that feyned
To singe, for ech of hem him peyned
To finde out mery crafty notes;
They ne spared not hir throtes.
And, sooth to seyn, my chambre was
Ful wel depeynted, and with glas
Were al the windows wel y-glased,
Ful clere, and nat an hole y-crased,
That to beholde hit was gret Ioye.
For hoolly al the storie of Troye
Was in the glasing y-wroght thus,
Of Ector and king Priamus,
Of Achilles and Lamedon,
Of Medea and of Iason,
Of Paris, Eleyne, and Lavyne.
And alle the walles with colours fyne
Were peynted, bothe text and glose,
[Of] al the Romaunce of the Rose.
My windowes weren shet echon,
And through the glas the sunne shon
Upon my bed with brighte bemes,
With many glade gilden stremes;
And eek the welken was so fair,
Blew, bright, clere was the air,
And ful atempre, for sothe, hit was;
For nother cold nor hoot hit nas,
Ne in al the welken was a cloude.
And as I lay thus, wonder loude
Me thoughte I herde an hunte blowe
Tassaye his horn, and for to knowe
Whether hit were clere or hors of soune.
I herde goinge, up and doune,
Men, hors, houndes, and other thing;
And al men speken of hunting,
How they wolde slee the hert with strengthe,
And how the hert had, upon lengthe,
So moche embosed, I not now what.
Anon-right, whan I herde that,
How that they wolde on hunting goon,
I was right glad, and up anoon;
[I] took my hors, and forth I wente
Out of my chambre; I never stente
Til I com to the feld withoute.
Ther overtook I a gret route

Of huntes and eek of foresteres,
With many relayes and lymeres,
And hyed hem to the forest faste
And I with hem; — so at the laste
I asked oon, ladde a lymere: —
'Say, felow, who shal hunten here'
Quod I; and he answerde ageyn,
'Sir, themperour Octovien,'
Quod he, 'and is heer faste by.'
'A goddes halfe, in good tyme,' quod I,
'Go we faste!' and gan to ryde.
Whan we came to the forest-syde,
Every man dide, right anoon,
As to hunting fil to doon.
The mayster-hunte anoon, fot-hoot,
With a gret horne blew three moot
At the uncoupling of his houndes.
Within a whyl the hert [y]-founde is,
Y-halowed, and rechased faste
Longe tyme; and at the laste,
This hert rused and stal away
Fro alle the houndes a prevy way.
The houndes had overshote hem alle,
And were on a defaute y-falle;
Therwith the hunte wonder faste
Blew a forloyn at the laste.
I was go walked fro my tree,
And as I wente, ther cam by me
A whelp, that fauned me as I stood,
That hadde y-folowed, and coude no good.
Hit com and creep to me as lowe,
Right as hit hadde me y-knowe,
Hild doun his heed and loyned his eres,
And leyde al smothe doun his heres.
I wolde han caught hit, and anoon
Hit fledde, and was fro me goon;
And I him folwed, and hit forth wente
Doun by a floury grene wente
Ful thikke of gras, ful softe and swete,
With floures fele, faire under fete,
And litel used, hit seemed thus;
For bothe Flora and Zephirus,
They two that make floures growe,
Had mad hir dwelling ther, I trowe;
For hit was, on to beholde,
As thogh the erthe envye wolde
To be gayer than the heven,
To have mo floures, swiche seven
As in the welken sterres be.
Hit had forgete the povertee
That winter, through his colde morwes,
Had mad hit suffren, and his sorwes;
Al was forgeten, and that was sene.
For al the wode was waxen grene,
Swetnesse of dewe had mad it waxe.
Hit is no need eek for to axe
Wher ther were many grene greves,
Or thikke of trees, so ful of leves;
And every tree stood by him-selve
Fro other wel ten foot or twelve.
So grete trees, so huge of strengthe,
Of fourty or fifty fadme lengthe,
Clene withoute bough or stikke,
With croppes brode, and eek as thikke —
They were nat an inche a-sonder —
That hit was shadwe over-al under;
And many an hert and many an hinde
Was both before me and bihinde.
Of founes, soures, bukkes, doës
Was ful the wode, and many roës,
And many squirelles that sete
Ful hye upon the trees, and ete,
And in hir maner made festes.
Shortly, hit was so ful of bestes,
That thogh Argus, the noble countour,
Sete to rekene in his countour,
And rekened with his figures ten —
For by tho figures mowe al ken,
If they be crafty, rekene and noumbre,
And telle of every thing the noumbre —
Yet shulde he fayle to rekene even
The wondres, me mette in my sweven
But forth they romed wonder faste
Doun the wode; so at the laste
I was war of a man in blak,
That sat and had y-turned his bak
To an oke, an huge tree.
'Lord,' thoghte I, 'who may that be?'
What ayleth him to sitten here?
Anoon-right I wente nere;
Than fond I sitte even upright
A wonder wel-faringe knight —
By the maner me thoughte so —
Of good mochel, and yong therto,
Of the age of four and twenty yeer.
Upon his herde but litel heer,
And he was clothed al in blakke.
I stalked even unto his bakke,
And ther I stood as stille as ought,
That, sooth to saye, he saw me nought,
For-why he heng his heed adoune.
And with a deedly sorwful soune
He made of ryme ten vers or twelve,
Of a compleynt to him-selve,
The moste pite, the moste rowthe,
That ever I herde; for, by my trowthe,

Hit was gret wonder that nature
Might suffren any creature
To have swich sorwe, and be not deed.
Ful pitous, pale, and nothing reed,
He sayde a lay, a maner song,
Withoute note, withoute song,
And hit was this; for wel I can
Reherse hit; right thus hit began. —
¶ 'I have of sorwe so gret wooñ,
That Ioye gete I never noon,
Now that I see my lady bright,
Which I have loved with al my might,
Is fro me deed, and is a-goon.
¶ Allas, [o] deeth! what ayleth thee,
That thou noldest have taken me,
Whan that thou toke my lady swetè?
That was so fayr, so fresh, so free,
So good, that men may wel [y]-sée
Of al goodnesse she had no mete!' —
Whan he had mad thus his complaynte,
His sorowful herte gan faste fayntè,
And his spirites wexen dede;
The blood was fled, for pure drede,
Doun to his herte, to make him warm —
For wel hit feled the herte had harm —
To wite eek why hit was a-drad
By kinde, and for to make hit glad;
For hit is membre principal
Of the body; and that madè al
His hewe chaunge and wexe grenè
And pale, for nó blood [was] sène
In no maner lime of his.
Anoon therwith whan I saw this,
He ferde thus evel ther he sete,
I wente and stood right at his fetè,
And grette him, but he spak noght,
But argued with his owne thoght,
And in his witte disputed faste
Why and how his lyf might laste;
Him thoughtè his sorwes were so smerte
And lay so colde upon his hérte;
So, through his sorwe and hevy thoght,
Made him that he ne herde me noght;
For he had wèl nigh lost his mindè,
Thogh Pan, that men clepe god of kinde,
Were for his sorwes never so wrooth.
But at the laste, to sayn right sooth,
He was war of me, how I stood
Before him, and dide of myn hood,
And [grette] him, as I best coude.
Debonairly, and no-thing loude,
He saydè, 'I prey thee, be not wrooth,
I herde thée not, to sayn the sooth,
Ne I saw thee not, sir, trewely.'
'A! goode sir, no fors,' quod I,
'I am right sory if I have ought
Destroubled yow out of your thought;
For-yive me if I have mis-take.'
'Yis, thamendes is light to make,'
Quod he, 'for ther lyth noon ther-to;
Ther is no-thing missayd nor do.'
Lo! how goodly spak this knight,
As it had been another wight;
He made it nouther tough ne queynte.
And I saw that, and gan me aqueynte
With him, and fond him so tretable,
Right wonder skilful and resonable,
As me thoghte, for al his bale.
Anoon-right I gan finde a tale
To him, to loke wher I might ought
Have more knowing of his thought.
'Sir,' quod I, 'this game is doon;
I holde that this hert be goon;
Thise huntes conne him nowher see.'
'I do no fors therof,' quod he,
'My thought is ther-on never a del.'
'By our lord,' quod I, 'I trow yow wel,
Right so me thinketh by your chere.
But, sir, oo thing wol ye here?
Me thinketh, in gret sorwe I yow see;
But certes, [good] sir, yif that ye
Wolde ought discure me your wo,
I wolde, as wis god helpe me so,
Amende hit, yif I can or may;
Ye mowe preve hit by assay.
For, by my trouthe, to make yow hool,
I wol do al my power hool;
And telleth me of your sorwes smerte,
Paraventure hit may ese your herte,
That semeth ful seke under your syde.'
With that he loked on me asyde,
As who sayth, 'nay, that wol not be.'
'Graunt mercy, goode frend,' quod he,
'I thanke thee that thou woldest so,
But hit may never the rather be do.
No man may my sorwe glade,
That maketh my hewe to falle and fade,
And hath myn understonding lorn,
That me is wo that I was born!
May noght make my sorwes slyde,
Nought the remedies of Ovyde;
Ne Orpheus, god of melodye,
Ne Dedalus, with playes slye;
Ne hele me may phisicien,
Noght Ypocras, ne Galien;
Me is wo that I live houres twelve;

But who so wol assaye him-selve
Whether his herte can have pite
Of any sorwe, lat him see me.
I wrecche, that deeth hath mad al naked
Of alle blisse that was ever maked,
Y-worthe worste of alle wightes,
That hate my dayes and my nightes;
My lyf, my lustes be me lothe,
For al welfare and I be wrothe.
The pure deeth is so my fo,
[Thogh] I wolde deye, hit wolde not so;
For whan I folwe hit, hit wol flee;
I wolde have [hit], hit nil not me.
This is my peyne withoute reed,
Alway deying, and be not deed,
That Sesiphus, that lyth in helle,
May not of more sorwe telle.
And who so wiste al, by my trouthe,
My sorwe, but he hadde routhe
And pite of my sorwes smerte,
That man hath a feendly herte.
For who so seeth me first on morwe
May seyn, he hath [y]-met with sorwe;
For I am sorwe and sorwe is I.
'Allas! and I wol telle the why;
My [song] is turned to pleyning,
And al my laughter to weping,
My glade thoghtes to hevinesse,
In travaile is myn ydelnesse
And eek my reste; my wele is wo.
My good is harm, and ever-mo
In wrathe is turned my pleying,
And my delyt in-to sorwing.
Myn hele is turned into seeknesse,
In drede is al my sikernesse.
To derke is turned al my light,
My wit is foly, my day is night,
My love is hate, my sleep waking,
My mirthe and meles is fasting,
My countenaunce is nycete,
And al abaved wher-so I be,
My pees, in pleding and in werre;
Allas! how mighte I fare werre?
'My boldnesse is turned to shame,
For fals Fortune hath pleyd a game
Atte ches with me, allas! the whyle!
The trayteresse fals and ful of gyle,
That al behoteth and no-thing halt,
She goth upryght and yet she halt,
That baggeth foule and loketh faire,
The dispitousë debonaire,
That scorneth many a creature!
An ydole of fals portraiture
Is she, for she wil sone wryen;
She is the monstres heed y-wryen,
As filth over y-strawed with floures;
Hir moste worship and hir [flour is]
To lyen, for that is hir nature;
Withoute feyth, lawe, or mesure
She is fals; and ever laughinge
With oon eye, and that other wepinge.
That is broght up, she set al doun.
I lykne hir to the scorpioun,
That is a fals flatering beste;
For with his hede he maketh feste,
But al amid his flateringe
With his tayle he wol stinge,
And envenyme; and so wol she.
She is thenvyous charite
That is ay fals, and semeth wele,
So turneth she hir false whele
Aboute, for it is no-thing stable,
Now by the fyre, now at table;
Ful many oon hath she thus y-blent.
She is pley of enchauntement,
That semeth oon and is nat so,
The false theef! what hath she do,
Trowest thou? by our lord, I wol thee seye.
Atte ches with me she gan to pleye;
With hir false draughtes divers
She stal on me, and took my fers.
And whan I saw my fers aweye,
Alas! I couthe no lenger pleye,
But seyde, "farwel, swete, y-wis,
And farwel al that ever ther is!"
Therwith Fortune seyde, "chek here!"
And "mate!" in mid pointe of the chekkere
With a poune erraunt, allas!
Ful craftier to pley she was
Than Athalus, that made the game
First of the ches; so was his name.
But god wolde I had ones or twyes
Y-koud and knowe the Ieupardyes
That coude the Grek Pithagores!
I shulde have pleyd the bet at ches,
And kept my fers the bet therby;
And thogh wherto? for trewely
I hold that wish nat worth a stree!
Hit had be never the bet for me.
For Fortune can so many a wyle,
Ther be but fewe can hir begyle,
And eek she is the las to blame;
My-self I wolde have do the same,
Before god, hadde I been as she;

She oghte the more excused be.
For this I say yet more therto,
Hadde I be god and mighte have do
My wille, whan my fers she caughte, 681
I wolde have drawe the same draughte.
For, also wis god yive me reste,
I dar wel swere she took the beste!
'But through that draughte I have lorn 685
My blisse; allas! that I was born!
For evermore, I trowe trewly,
For al my wil, my lust hoolly
Is turned; but yet, what to done?
By our lord, hit is to deye sone; 690
For no-thing I [ne] leve it noght,
But live and deye right in this thoght.
Ther nis planete in firmament,
Ne in air, ne in erthe, noon element,
That they ne yive me a yift echoon 695
Of weping, whan I am aloon.
For whan that I avyse me wel,
And bethenke me every-del,
How that ther lyth in rekening,
In my sorwe, for no-thing; 700
And how ther leveth no gladnesse
May gladde me of my distresse,
And how I have lost suffisance,
And therto I have no plesance,
Than may I say, I have right noght. 705
And whan al this falleth in my thoght,
Allas! than am I overcome!
For that is doon is not to come!
I have more sorowe than Tantale.'
And whan I herde him telle this tale
Thus pitously, as I yow telle, 711
Unnethe mighte I lenger dwelle,
Hit dide myn herte so moche wo.
'A! good sir!' quod I, 'say not so!
Have som pite on your nature 715
That formed yow to creature.
Remembre yow of Socrates;
For he ne counted nat three strees
Of noght that Fortune coude do.'
'No,' quod he, 'I can not so.' 720
'Why so? good sir! parde!' quod I;
'Ne say noght so, for trewely,
Thogh ye had lost the ferses twelve,
And ye for sorwe mordred your-selve,
Ye sholde be dampned in this cas 725
By as good right as Medea was,
That slow hir children for Iason;
And Phyllis als for Demophon
Heng hir-self, so weylaway!
For he had broke his terme-day 730
To come to hir. Another rage
Had Dydo, quene eek of Cartage,
That slow hir-self, for Eneas
Was fals; [a!] whiche a fool she was!
And Ecquo dyed for Narcisus 735
Nolde nat love hir; and right thus
Hath many another foly don.
And for Dalida dyed Sampson,
That slow him-self with a pilere.
But ther is [noon] a-lyve here 740
Wolde for a fers make this wo!'
'Why so?' quod he; 'hit is nat so;
Thou wost ful litel what thou menest;
I have lost more than thou wenest.'
'Lo, [sir,] how may that be?' quod I;
'Good sir, tel me al hoolly 746
In what wyse, how, why, and wherefore
That ye have thus your blisse lore.'
'Blythly,' quod he, 'com sit adoun;
I telle thee up condicioun 750
That thou hoolly, with al thy wit,
Do thyn entent to herkene hit.'
'Yis, sir.' 'Swere thy trouthe ther-to.'
'Gladly.' 'Do than holde her-to!'
'I shal right blythly, so god me save, 755
Hoolly, with al the witte I have,
Here yow, as wel as I can.'
'A goddes half!' quod he, and began:
'Sir,' quod he, 'sith first I couthe
Have any maner wit fro youthe, 760
Or kyndely understonding
To comprehende, in any thing,
What love was, in myn owne wit,
Dredeles, I have ever yit
Be tributary, and yiven rente 765
To love hoolly with goode entente,
And through plesaunce become his thral,
With good wil, body, herte, and al.
Al this I putte in his servage,
As to my lorde, and dide homage; 770
And ful devoutly prayde him to,
He shulde besette myn herte so,
That it plesaunce to him were,
And worship to my lady dere.
'And this was longe, and many a yeer
Or that myn herte was set o-wher, 776
That I did thus, and niste why;
I trowe hit cam me kindely.
Paraunter I was therto most able
As a whyt wal or a table; 780
For hit is redy to cacche and take
Al that men wil therin make,

Wher-so men wol portreye or peynte,
Be the werkes never so queynte.
'And thilke tyme I ferde so
I was able to have lerned tho,
And to have coud as wel or better,
Paraunter, other art or letter.
But for love cam first in my thought,
Therfore I forgat it nought.
I chees love to my firste craft,
Therfor hit is with me [y]-laft.
Forwhy I took hit of so yong age,
That malice hadde my corage
Nat that tyme turned to no-thing
Through to mochel knowleching.
For that tyme youthe, my maistresse,
Governed me in ydelnesse;
For hit was in my firste youthe,
And tho ful litel good I couthe;
For al my werkes were flittinge,
And al my thoghtes varyinge;
Al were to me y-liche good,
That I knew tho; but thus hit stood.
'Hit happed that I cam on a day
Into a place, ther I say,
Trewly, the fayrest companyë
Of ladies, that ever man with yë
Had seen togedres in oo place.
Shal I clepe hit hap other grace
That broghte me ther? nay, but Fortune,
That is to lyen ful comune,
The false trayteresse, pervers,
God wolde I coude clepe hir wers!
For now she worcheth me ful wo,
And I wol telle sone why so.
'Among thise ladies thus echoon,
Soth to seyn, I saw [ther] oon
That was lyk noon of [al] the route;
For I dar swere, withoute doute,
That as the someres sonne bright
Is fairer, clerer, and hath more light
Than any planete, [is] in heven,
The mone, or the sterres seven,
For al the worlde, so had she
Surmounted hem alle of beaute,
Of maner and of comlinesse,
Of stature and wel set gladnesse,
Of goodlihede so wel beseye —
Shortly, what shal I more seye?
By god, and by his halwes twelve,
It was my swete, right as hir-selve!
She had so stedfast countenaunce,
So noble port and meyntenaunce.
And Love, that had herd my bone,
Had espyed me thus sone,
That she ful sone, in my thoght,
As helpe me god, so was y-caught
So sodenly, that I ne took
No maner [reed] but at hir look
And at myn herte; for-why hir eyen
So gladly, I trow, myn herte seyen,
That purely tho myn owne thoght
Seyde hit were [bet] serve hir for noght
Than with another to be wel.
And hit was sooth, for, everydel,
I wil anoon-right telle thee why.
'I saw hir daunce so comlily,
Carole and singe so swetely,
Laughe and pleye so womanly,
And loke so debonairly,
So goodly speke and so frendly,
That certes, I trow, that evermore
Nas seyn so blisful a tresore.
For every heer [up]on hir hede,
Soth to seyn, hit was not rede,
Ne nouther yelw, ne broun hit nas;
Me thoghte, most lyk gold hit was.
And whiche eyen my lady hadde!
Debonair, goode, glade, and sadde,
Simple, of good mochel, noght to wyde;
Therto hir look nas not a-syde,
Ne overthwert, but beset so wel,
Hit drew and took up, everydel,
Alle that on hir gan beholde.
Hir eyen semed anoon she wolde
Have mercy; fooles wenden so;
But hit was never the rather do.
Hit nas no countrefeted thing,
It was hir owne pure loking,
That the goddesse, dame Nature,
Had made hem opene by mesure,
And close; for, were she never so glad,
Hir loking was not foly sprad,
Ne wildely, thogh that she pleyde;
But ever, me thoghte, hir eyen seyde,
"By god, my wrathe is al for-yive!"
'Therwith hir liste so wel to live,
That dulnesse was of hir a-drad.
She nas to sobre ne to glad;
In alle thinges more mesure
Had never, I trowe, creature.
But many oon with hir loke she herte,
And that sat hir ful lyte at herte,
For she knew no-thing of hir thoght;
But whether she knew or knew hit noght,
Algate she ne roghte of hem a stree!
To gete hir love no ner nas he

That woned at home, than he in Inde;
The formest was alway behinde.
But goode folk, over al other,
She loved as man may do his brother;
Of whiche love she was wonder large,
In skilful places that here charge.
'Which a visage had she ther-to!
Allas! myn herte is wonder wo
That I ne can discryven hit!
Me lakketh bothe English and wit
For to undo hit at the fulle;
And eek my spirits be so dulle
So greet a thing for to devyse.
I have no wit that can suffyse
To comprehenden hir beaute;
But thus moche dar I seyn, that she
Was rody, fresh, and lyvely hewed;
And every day hir beaute newed.
And negh hir face was alder-best;
For certes, Nature had swich lest
To make that fair, that trewly she
Was hir cheef patron of beautee,
And cheef ensample of al hir werke.
And moustre; for, be hit never so derke,
Me thinketh I see hir ever-mo.
And yet more-over, thogh alle tho
That ever lived were now a-lyve,
[They] ne sholde have founde to discryve
In al hir face a wikked signe;
For hit was sad, simple, and benigne.
'And which a goodly softe speche
Had that swete, my lyves leche!
So frendly, and so wel y-grounded,
Up al resoun so wel y-founded,
And so tretable to alle gode,
That I dar swere by the rode,
Of eloquence was never founde
So swete a sowninge facounde,
Ne trewer tonged, ne scorned lasse,
Ne bet coude hele; that, by the masse
I durste swere, thogh the pope hit songe,
That ther was never through hir tonge
Man ne woman gretly harmed;
As for hir, [ther] was al harm hid;
Ne lasse flatering in hir worde,
That purely, hir simple recorde
Was founde as trewe as any bonde,
Or trouthe of any mannes honde.
Ne chyde she coude never a del,
That knoweth al the world ful wel.
'But swich a fairnesse of a nekke
Had that swete, that boon nor brekke
Nas ther non sene, that mis-sät.
Hit was whyt, smothe, streght, and flat,
Withouten hole; [and] canel-boon,
As by seming, had she noon.
Hir throte, as I have now memoire,
Semed a round tour of yvoire,
Of good gretnesse, and noght to grete.
'And gode faire WHYTE she hete,
That was my lady name right.
She was bothe fair and bright,
She hadde not hir name wrong.
Right faire shuldres, and body long
She hadde, and armes, every lith
Fattish, flesshy, not greet therwith;
Right whyte handes, and nayles rede,
Rounde brestes; and of good brede
Hir hippes were, a streight flat bak.
I knew on hir non other lak
That al hir limmes nere sewing,
In as fer as I had knowing.
'Therto she coude so wel pleye,
Whan that hir liste, that I dar seye,
That she was lyk to torche bright,
That every man may take of light
Ynogh, and hit hath never the lesse.
'Of maner and of comlinesse
Right so ferde my lady dere;
For every wight of hir manere
Might cacche ynogh, if that he wolde,
If he had eyen hir to beholde.
For I dar sweren, if that she
Had among ten thousand be,
She wolde have be, at the leste,
A cheef mirour of al the feste,
Thogh they had stonden in a rowe,
To mennes eyen that coude have knowe.
For wher-so men had pleyd or waked,
Me thoghte the felawship as naked
Withouten hir, that saw I ones,
As a coroune withoute stones.
Trewely she was, to myn yë,
The soleyn fenix of Arabye,
For ther liveth never but oon;
Ne swich as she ne knew I noon.
'To speke of goodnesse; trewly she
Had as moche debonairte
As ever had Hester in the bible,
And more, if more were possible.
And, soth to seyne, therwith-al
She had a wit so general,
So hool enclyned to alle gode,
That al hir wit was set, by the rode,
Withoute malice, upon gladnesse;

Therto I saw never yet a lesse
Harmful, than she was in doing.
I sey nat that she ne had knowing
What was harm; or elles she
Had coud no good, so thinketh me.
'And trewly, for to speke of trouthe,
But she had had, hit had be routhe.
Therof she had so moche hir del —
And I dar seyn and swere hit wel —
That Trouthe him-self, over al and al,
Had chose his maner principal
In hir, that was his resting-place.
Ther-to she hadde the moste grace,
To have stedfast perseveraunce,
And esy, atempre governaunce,
That ever I knew or wiste yit;
So pure suffraunt was hir wit.
And reson gladly she understood,
Hit folowed wel she coude good.
She used gladly to do wel;
These were hir maners every-del.
'Therwith she loved so wel right,
She wrong do wolde to no wight;
No wight might do hir no shame,
She loved so wel hir owne name.
Hir luste to holde no wight in honde;
Ne, be thou siker, she nolde fonde
To holde no wight in balaunce,
By half word ne by countenaunce,
But-if men wolde upon hir lye;
Ne sende men in-to Walakye,
To Pruyse and in-to Tartarye,
To Alisaundre, ne in-to Turkye,
An bidde him faste, anoon that he
Go hoodles to the drye see,
And come hoom by the Carrenare;
And seye, "Sir, be now right ware
That I may of yow here seyn
Worship, or that ye come ageyn!"
She ne used no suche knakkes smale.
'But wherfor that I telle my tale?
Right on this same, as I have seyd,
Was hoolly al my love leyd;
For certes, she was, that swete wyf,
My suffisaunce, my lust, my lyf,
Myn hap, myn hele, and al my blisse,
My worldes welfare and my [lisse],
And I hirs hoolly, everydel.'
'By our lord,' quod I, 'I trowe yow wel!
Hardely, your love was wel beset,
I not how ye mighte have do bet.'
'Bet? ne no wight so wel!' quod he.
'I trowe hit, sir,' quod I, 'parde!'
'Nay, leve hit wel!' 'Sir, so do I;
I leve yow wel, that trewely
Yow thoghte, that she was the beste,
And to beholde the alderfaireste,
Who so had loked with your eyen.'
'With myn? nay, alle that hir seyen
Seyde, and sworen hit was so.
And thogh they ne hadde, I wolde tho
Have loved best my lady fre,
Thogh I had had al the beautee
That ever had Alcipyades,
And al the strengthe of Ercules,
And therto had the worthinesse
Of Alisaundre, and al the richesse
That ever was in Babiloyne,
In Cartage, or in Macedoyne,
Or in Rome, or in Ninive;
And therto al-so hardy be
As was Ector, so have I Ioye,
That Achilles slow at Troye —
And therfor was he slayn also
In a temple, for bothe two
Were slayn, he and Antilogus,
And so seyth Dares Frigius,
For love of [hir] Polixena —
Or ben as wys as Minerva,
I wolde ever, withoute drede,
Have loved hir, for I moste nede!
"Nede!" nay, I gabbe now,
Noght "nede," and I wol telle how,
For of good wille myn herte hit wolde,
And eek to love hir I was holde
As for the fairest and the beste.
'She was as good, so have I reste,
As ever was Penelope of Grece,
Or as the noble wyf Lucrece,
That was the beste — he telleth thus,
The Romain Tytus Livius —
She was as good, and no-thing lyke,
Thogh hir stories be autentyke;
Algate she was as trewe as she.
'But wherfor that I telle thee
Whan I first my lady sey?
I was right yong, [the] sooth to sey,
And ful gret need I hadde to lerne;
Whan my herte wolde yerne
To love, it was a greet empryse.
But as my wit coude best suffyse,
After myyonge childly wit,
Withoute drede, I besette hit
To love hir in my beste wyse,
To do hir worship and servyse

That I tho coude, by my trouthe,
Wlthoute feyning outher slouthe;
For wonder fayn I wolde hir see.
So mochel hit amended me,
That, whan I saw hir first a-morwe,
I was warished of al my sorwe
Of al day after, til hit were eve;
Me thoghte no-thing mighte me greve,
Were my sorwes never so smerte.
And yit she sit so in myn herte,
That, by my trouthe, I nolde noght,
For al this worlde, out of my thoght
Leve my lady; no, trewly!'
'Now, by my trouthe, sir,' quod I,
'Me thinketh ye have such a chaunce
As shrift withoute repentaunce.'
'Repentaunce! nay fy,' quod he;
'Shulde I now repente me
To love? nay, certes, than were I wel
Wers than was Achitofel,
Or Anthenor, so have I loye,
The traytour that betraysed Troye,
Or the false Genelon,
He that purchased the treson
Of Rowland and of Olivere.
Nay, whyl I am a-lyve here
I nil foryete hir never-mo.'
'Now, goode sir,' quod I [right] tho,
'Ye han wel told me her-before.
It is no need reherse hit more
How ye sawe hir first, and where;
But wolde ye telle me the manere,
To hir which was your firste speche —
Therof I wolde yow be-seche —
And how she knewe first your thoght,
Whether ye loved hir or noght,
And telleth me eek what ye have lore;
I herde yow telle her-before.'
'Ye,' seyde he, 'thou nost what thou menest;
I have lost more than thou wenest.'
'What los is that, [sir]?' quod I tho;
'Nil she not love yow? is hit so?
Or have ye oght [y-]doon amis,
That she hath left yow? is hit this?
For goddes love, tel me al.'
'Before god,' quod he, 'and I shal.
I saye right as I have seyd,
On hir was al my love leyd;
And yet she niste hit never a del
Noght longe tyme, leve hit wel.
For be right siker, I durste noght
For al this worlde telle hir my thoght,
Ne I wolde have wratthed hir, trewly:
For wostow why? she was lady
Of the body; she had the herte,
And who hath that, may not asterte.
'But, for to kepe me fro ydelnesse,
Trewly I did my besinesse
To make songes, as I best coude,
And ofte tyme I song hem loude;
And made songes a gret del,
Al-thogh I coude not make so wel
Songes, ne knowe the art al,
As coude Lamekes sone Tubal,
That fond out first the art of songe;
For, as his brothers hamers ronge
Upon his anvelt up and doun,
Therof he took the firste soun;
But Grekes seyn, Pictagoras,
That he the firste finder was
Of the art; Aurora telleth so,
But therof no fors, of hem two.
Algates songes thus I made
Of my feling, myn herte to glade;
And lo! this was [the] alther-firste,
I not wher [that] hit were the werste. —
¶ "Lord, hit maketh myn herte light,
Whan I thenke on that swete wight
That is so semely on to see;
And wisshe to god hit might so be,
That she wolde holde me for hir knight.
My lady, that is so fair and bright!" —
'Now have I told thee, sooth to saye,
My firste song. Upon a daye
I bethoghte me what wo
And sorwe that I suffred tho
For hir, and yet she wiste hit noght,
Ne telle hir durste I nat my thoght.
"Allas!" thoghte I, "I can no reed;
And, but I telle hir, I nam but deed;
And if I telle hir, to seye sooth,
I am a-dred she wol be wrooth;
Allas! what shal I thanne do?"
'In this debat I was so wo,
Me thoghte myn herte braste a-tweyn!
So atte laste, soth to seyn,
I me bethoghte that nature
Ne formed never in creature
So moche beaute, trewely,
And bounte, withouten mercy.
'In hope of that, my tale I tolde
With sorwe, as that I never sholde,
For nedes; and, maugree my heed,
I moste have told hir or be deed.
I not wel how that I began,

Ful evel rehersen hit I can;
And eek, as helpe me god with-al,
I trowe hit was in the dismal,
That was the ten woundes of Egipte;
For many a word I over-skipte
In my tale, for pure fere
Lest my wordes mis-set were.
With sorweful herte, and woundes dede,
Softe and quaking for pure drede
And shame, and stinting in my tale
For ferde, and myn hewe al pale,
Ful ofte I wex bothe pale and reed;
Bowing to hir, I heng the heed;
I durste nat ones loke hir on,
For wit, manere, and al was gon.
I seyde "mercy!" and no more;
Hit nas no game, hit sat me sore.
'So atte laste, sooth to seyn,
Whan that myn herte was come ageyn,
To telle shortly al my speche,
With hool herte I gan hir beseche
That she wolde be my lady swete;
And swor, and gan hir hertely hete
Ever to be stedfast and trewe,
And love hir alwey freshly newe,
And never other lady have,
And al hir worship for to save
As I best coude; I swor hir this—
"For youres is al that ever ther is
For evermore, myn herte swete!
And never false yow, but I mete,
I nil, as wis god helpe me so!"
'And whan I had my tale y-do,
God wot, she acounted nat a stree
Of al my tale, so thoghte me.
To telle shortly as hit is,
Trewly hir answere, hit was this;
I can not now wel counterfete
Hir wordes, but this was the grete
Of hir answere; she sayde, "nay"
Al-outerly. Allas! that day
The sorwe I suffred, and the wo!
That trewly Cassandra, that so
Bewayled the destruccioun
Of Troye and of Ilioun,
Had never swich sorwe as I tho.
I durste no more say therto
For pure fere, but stal away;
And thus I lived ful many a day:
That trewely, I hadde no need
Ferther than my beddes heed
Never a day to seche sorwe;
I fond hit redy every morwe,
For-why I loved hir in no gere.
'So hit befel, another yere,
I thoughte ones I wolde fonde
To do hir knowe and understonde
My wo; and she wel understood
That I ne wilned thing but good,
And worship, and to kepe hir name
Over al thing, and drede hir shame,
And was so besy hir to serve;—
And pite were I shulde sterve,
Sith that I wilned noon harm, y-wis.
So whan my lady knew al this,
My lady yaf me al hoolly
The noble yift of hir mercy,
Saving hir worship, by al weyes;
Dredles, I mene noon other weyes.
And therwith she yaf me a ring;
I trowe hit was the firste thing;
But if myn herte was y-waxe
Glad, that is no need to axe!
As helpe me god, I was as blyve,
Reysed, as fro dethe to lyve,
Of alle happes the alder-beste,
The gladdest and the moste at reste.
For trewely, that swete wight,
Whan I had wrong and she the right,
She wolde alwey so goodely
For-yeve me so debonairly.
In alle my youthe, in alle chaunce,
She took me in hir governaunce.
'Therwith she was alway so trewe,
Our Ioye was ever y-liche newe;
Our hertes wern so even a payre,
That never nas that oon contrayre
To that other, for no wo.
For sothe, y-liche they suffred tho
Oo blisse and eek oo sorwe bothe;
Y-liche they were bothe gladde and wrothe;
Al was us oon, withoute were.
And thus we lived ful many a yere
So wel, I can nat telle how.'
'Sir,' quod I, 'wher is she now?'
'Now!' quod he, and stinte anoon.
Therwith he wex as deed as stoon,
And seyde, 'allas! that I was bore!
That was the los, that her-before
I tolde thee, that I had lorn.
Bethenk how I seyde her-beforn,
"Thou wost ful litel what thou menest;
I have lost more than thou wenest"—
God wot, allas! right that was she!'
'Allas! sir, how? what may that be?'

'She is deed!' 'Nay!' 'Yis, by my trouthe!'
'Is that your los? by god, hit is routhe!'
And with that worde, right anoon,
They gan to strake forth; al was doon,
For that tyme, the hert-hunting.
With that, me thoghte, that this king
Gan [quikly] hoomward for to ryde
Unto a place ther besyde,
Which was from us but a lyte,
A long castel with walles whyte,
By seynt Iohan! on a riche hil,
As me mette; but thus it fil.
Right thus me mette, as I yow telle,
That in the castel was a belle,
As hit had smiten houres twelve.—

Therwith I awook my-selve,
And fond me lying in my bed;
And the book that I had red,
Of Alcyone and Seys the king,
And of the goddes of sleping,
I fond it in myn honde ful even.
Thoghte I, 'this is so queynt a sweven,
That I wol, by processe of tyme,
Fonde to putte this sweven in ryme
As I can best'; and that anoon.—
This was my sweven; now hit is doon.

Explicit the Boke of the Duchesse.

IV. THE COMPLEYNT OF MARS.

The Proem.

'Gladeth, ye foules, of the morow gray,
Lo! Venus risen among yon rowes rede!
And floures fresshe, honoureth ye this day;
For when the sonne uprist, then wol ye sprede.
But ye lovers, that lye in any drede,
Fleëth, lest wikked tonges yow espye;
Lo! yond the sonne, the candel of Ielosye!

With teres blewe, and with a wounded herte
Taketh your leve; and, with seynt Iohn to borow,
Apeseth somwhat of your sorowes smerte,
Tyme cometh eft, that cese shal your sorow;
The glade night is worth an hevy morow!'—
(Seynt Valentyne! a foul thus herde I singe
Upon thy day, er sonne gan upspringe).—

Yet sang this foul—'I rede yow al a-wake,
And ye, that han not chosen in humble wyse,
Without repenting cheseth yow your make.
And ye, that han ful chosen as I devyse,
Yet at the leste renoveleth your servyse:
Confermeth it perpetuely to dure,
And paciently taketh your aventure.

And for the worship of this hye feste,
Yet wol I, in my briddes wyse, singe
The sentence of the compleynt, at the leste,
That woful Mars made atte departinge
Fro fresshe Venus in a morweninge,
Whan Phebus, with his fyry torches rede,
Ransaked every lover in his drede.

The Story.

¶ Whylom the thridde hevenes lord above,
As wel by hevenish revolucion
As by desert, hath wonne Venus his love,
And she hath take him in subieccioun,
And as a maistresse taught him his lessoun,
Comaunding him that never, in hir servyse,
He nere so bold no lover to despyse.

For she forbad him Ielosye at alle,
And cruelte, and bost, and tirannye;

She made him at hir lust so humble and
talle,
That when hir deyned caste on him her yë,
He took in pacience to live or dye;
And thus she brydeleth him in hir
manere,
With no-thing but with scourging of hir
chere.

Who regneth now in blisse but Venus,
That hath this worthy knight in gover-
naunce?
Who singeth now but Mars, that serveth
thus
The faire Venus, causer of plesaunce?
He bynt him to perpetual obeisaunce,
And she bynt hir to loven him for ever,
But so be that his trespas hit dissever.

Thus be they knit, and regnen as in
heven
By loking most; til hit fil, on a tyde,
That by hir bothe assent was set a
steven,
That Mars shal entre, as faste as he may
glyde,
Into hir nexte paleys, to abyde,
Walking his cours til she had him
a-take,
And he preyde hir to haste hir for his
sake.

Then seyde he thus — "myn hertes lady
swete,
Ye knowe wel my mischef in that place;
For sikerly, til that I with yow mete,
My lyf stant ther in aventure and grace;
But when I see the beaute of your face,
Ther is no dreed of deth may do me
smerte,
For al your lust is ese to myn herte."

She hath so gret compassion of hir
knight,
That dwelleth in solitude til she come;
For hit stood so, that ilke tyme, no
wight
Counseyled him, ne seyde to him wel-
come,
That nigh hir wit for wo was overcome;
Wherfore she spedde hir as faste in hir
weye,
Almost in oon day, as he dide in tweye,
The grete Ioye that was betwix hem two,
Whan they be met, ther may no tunge
telle
Ther is no more, but unto bed they go,
And thus in Ioye and blisse I lete hem
dwelle;
This worthy Mars, that is of knighthod
welle,
The flour of fairnes lappeth in his armes,
And Venus kisseth Mars, the god of
armes.

Soiourned hath this Mars, of which I
rede,
In chambre amid the paleys prively
A certeyn tyme, til him fel a drede,
Through Phebus, that was comen hastely
Within the paleys-yates sturdely,
With torche in honde, of which the
stremes brighte
On Venus chambre knokkeden ful lighte.

The chambre, ther as lay this fresshe
quene,
Depeynted was with whyte boles grete,
And by the light she knew, that shoon
so shene,
That Phebus cam to brenne hem with his
hete;
This sely Venus, dreynt in teres wete,
Enbraceth Mars, and seyde, "alas! I dye!
The torch is come, that al this world wol
wrye."

Up sterte Mars, him liste not to slepe,
Whan he his lady herde so compleyne;
But, for his nature was not for to wepe,
In stede of teres, fro his eyen tweyne
The fyry sparkes brosten out for peyne;
And hente his hauberk, that lay him
besyde;
Flee wolde he not, ne mighte him-selven
hyde.

He throweth on his helm of huge wighte,
And girt him with his swerde; and in
his honde
His mighty spere, as he was wont to
fighte,
He shaketh so that almost it to-wonde;
Ful hevy he was to walken over londe;
He may not holde with Venus companye,
But bad hir fleen, lest Phebus hir espye.

O woful Mars! alas! what mayst thou seyn,
That in the paleys of thy disturbaunce
Art left behinde, in peril to be sleyn?
And yet ther-to is double thy penaunce,
For she, that hath thyn herte in governaunce,
Is passed halfe the stremes of thyn yën;
That thou nere swift, wel mayst thou wepe and cryen.

Now fleeth Venus un-to Cylenius tour,
With voide cours, for fere of Phebus light.
Alas! and ther ne hath she no socour,
For she ne fond ne saw no maner wight;
And eek as ther she had but litil might;
Wher-for, hir-selven for to hyde and save,
Within the gate she fledde into a cave.

Derk was this cave, and smoking as the helle,
Not but two pas within the gate hit stood;
A naturel day in derk I lete hir dwelle.
Now wol I speke of Mars, furious and wood;
For sorow he wolde have seen his herte blood;
Sith that he mighte hir don no companye,
He ne roghte not a myte for to dye.

So feble he wex, for hete and for his wo,
That nigh he swelt, he mighte unnethe endure;
He passeth but oo steyre in dayes two,
But ner the les, for al his hevy armure,
He foloweth hir that is his lyves cure;
For whos departing he took gretter yre
Thanne for al his brenning in the fyre.

After he walketh softely a pas,
Compleyning, that hit pite was to here.
He seyde, "O lady bright, Venus! alas!
That ever so wyde a compas is my spere!
Alas! whan shal I mete yow, herte dere,
This twelfte day of April I endure,
Through Ielous Phebus, this misaventure."

Now god helpe sely Venus allone!
But, as god wolde, hit happed for to be,
That, whyl that Venus weping made hir mone,
Cylenius, ryding in his chevauchè,
Fro Venus valance mighte his paleys see,
And Venus he salueth, and maketh chere,
And hir receyveth as his frend ful dere.

Mars dwelleth forth in his adversite,
Compleyning ever on hir departinge;
And what his compleynt was, remembreth me;
And therfore, in this lusty morweninge,
As I best can, I wol hit seyn and singe,
And after that I wol my leve take;
And God yeve every wight Ioye of his make!

THE COMPLEYNT OF MARS.

The Proem of the Compleynt.

¶ The ordre of compleynt requireth skilfully,
That if a wight shal pleyne pitously,
There mot be cause wherfor that men pleyne;
Or men may deme he pleyneth folily
And causeles; alas! that am not I!
Wherfor the ground and cause of al my peyne,
So as my troubled wit may hit ateyne,
I wol reherse; not for to have redresse,
But to declare my ground of hevinesse.

Devotion.

¶ The firste tyme, alas! that I was wroght,
And for certeyn effectes hider broght
By him that lordeth ech intelligence,
I yaf my trewe servise and my thoght,
For evermore — how dere I have hit boght! —
To hir, that is of so gret excellence,
That what wight that first sheweth his presence,
When she is wroth and taketh of him no cure,
He may not longe in Ioye of love endure.

This is no feyned mater that I telle;
My lady is the verrey sours and welle
Of beaute, lust, fredom, and gentilnesse,
Of riche aray — how dere men hit selle! —
Of al disport in which men frendly dwelle,

Of love and pley, and of benigne humblesse,
Of soune of instruments of al swetnesse;
And therto so wel fortuned and thewed,
That through the world hir goodnesse is y-shewed.

What wonder is then, thogh that I besette
My servise on suche oon, that may me knette
To wele or wo, sith hit lyth in hir might?
Therfor my herte for ever I to hir hette;
Ne trewly, for my dethe, I shal not lette
To ben hir trewest servaunt and hir knight.
I flater noght, that may wite every wight;
For this day in hir servise shal I dye;
But grace be, I see hir never with yë.

A Lady in fear and woe.

¶ To whom shal I than pleyne of my distresse?
Who may me helpe, who may my harm redresse?
Shal I compleyne unto my lady free?
Nay, certes! for she hath such hevinesse,
For fere and eek for wo, that, as I gesse,
In litil tyme hit wol hir bane be.
But were she sauf, hit wer no fors of me.
Alas! that ever lovers mote endure,
For love, so many a perilous aventure!

For thogh so be that lovers be as trewe
As any metal that is forged newe,
In many a cas hem tydeth ofte sorowe.
Somtyme hir ladies will not on hem rewe,
Somtyme, yif that Ielosye hit knewe,
They mighten lightly leye hir heed to borowe;
Somtyme envyous folk with tunges horowe
Depraven hem; alas! whom may they plese?
But he be fals, no lover hath his ese.

But what availeth suche a long sermoun
Of aventures of love, up and doun?
I wol returne and speken of my peyne;
The point is this of my destruccioun,
My righte lady, my salvacioun,
Is in affray, and not to whom to pleyne.
O herte swete, O lady sovereyne!
For your disese, wel oghte I swoune and swelte,
Thogh I non other harm ne drede felte.

Instability of Happiness.

¶ To what fyn made the god that sit so hye,
Benethen him, love other companye,
And streyneth folk to love, malgre hir hede?
And then hir Ioye, for oght I can espye,
Ne lasteth not the twinkeling of an yë,
And somme han never Ioye til they be dede.
What menith this? what is this mistihede?
Wherto constreyneth he his folk so faste
Thing to desyre, but hit shulde laste?

And thogh he made a lover love a thing,
And maketh hit seme stedfast and during,
Yet puttith he in hit such misaventure,
That reste nis ther noon in his yeving.
And that is wonder, that so Iust a king
Doth such hardnesse to his creature.
Thus, whether love breke or elles dure,
Algates he that hath with love to done
Hath ofter wo then changed is the mone.

Hit semeth he hath to lovers enmite,
And lyk a fissher, as men alday may see,

Baiteth his angle-hook with som plesaunce,
Til mony a fish is wood til that he be
Sesed ther-with; and then at erst hath he
Al his desyr, and ther-with al mis-chaunce;
And thogh the lyne breke, he hath penaunce;
For with the hoke he wounded is so sore,
That he his wages hath for ever-more.

The Brooch of Thebes.

¶ The broche of Thebes was of suche a kinde,
So ful of rubies and of stones Inde,
That every wight, that sette on hit an yë,
He wende anon to worthe out of his minde;
So sore the beaute wolde his herte binde,
Til he hit hadde, him thoghte he moste dye;
And whan that hit was his, than shulde he drye
Such wo for drede, ay whyl that he hit hadde,
That welnigh for the fere he shulde madde.

And whan hit was fro his possessioun,
Than had he double wo and passioun
For he so fair a tresor had forgo;
But yet this broche, as in conclusioun,
Was not the cause of this confusioun;
But he that wroghte hit enfortuned hit so,
That every wight that had hit shuld have wo;
And therfor in the worcher was the vyce,
And in the covetour that was so nyce.

So fareth hit by lovers and by me;
For thogh my lady have so gret beaute,
That I was mad til I had gete hir grace,
She was not cause of myn adversite,
But he that wroghte hir, also mot I thee,
That putte suche a beaute in hir face,
That made me to covete and purchace
Myn owne deth; him wyte I that I dye,
And myn unwit, that ever I clomb so hye.

An Appeal for Sympathy.

¶ But to yow, hardy knightes of renoun,
Sin that ye be of my divisioun,
Al be I not worthy to so grete a name,
Yet, seyn these clerkes, I am your patroun;
Ther-for ye oghte have som compassioun
Of my disese, and and take it noght a-game.
The proudest of yow may be mad ful tame;
Wherfor I prey yow, of your gentilesse,
That ye compleyne for myn hevinesse.

And ye, my ladies, that ben trewe and stable,
By way of kinde, ye oghten to be able
To have pite of folk that be in peyne:
Now have ye cause to clothe yow in sable;
Sith that your emperice, the honorable,
Is desolat, wel oghte ye to pleyne;
Now shuld your holy teres falle and reyne.
Alas! your honour and your emperice,
Nigh deed for drede, ne can hir not chevise.

Compleyneth eek, ye lovers, al in-fere,
For hir that, with unfeyned humble chere,
Was ever redy to do yow socour;
Compleyneth hir that ever hath had yow dere;
Compleyneth beaute, fredom, and manere;
Compleyneth hir that endeth your labour;
Compleyneth thilke ensample of al honour,
That never dide but al gentilesse;
Kytheth therfor on hir som kindenesse.'

V. THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES.

The Proem.

THE lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne,
Thassay so hard, so sharp the conquering,
The dredful Ioy, that alwey slit so yerne,
Al this mene I by love, that my feling
Astonyeth with his wonderful worching
So sore y-wis, that whan I on him thinke,
Nat wot I wel wher that I wake or winke.

For al be that I knowe not love in dede,
Ne wot how that he quyteth folk hir hyre,
Yet happeth me ful ofte in bokes rede
Of his miracles, and his cruel yre;
Ther rede I wel he wol be lord and syre,
I dar not seyn, his strokes been so sore,
But God save swich a lord! I can no more.

Of usage, what for luste what for lore,
On bokes rede I ofte, as I yow tolde.
But wherfor that I speke al this? not yore
Agon, hit happed me for to beholde
Upon a boke, was write with lettres olde;
And ther-upon, a certeyn thing to lerne,
The longe day ful faste I radde and yerne.

For out of olde feldes, as men seith,
Cometh al this newe corn fro yeer to yere;
And out of olde bokes, in good feith,
Cometh al this newe science that men lere.
But now to purpos as of this matere —
To rede forth hit gan me so delyte,
That al the day me thoughte but a lyte.

This book of which I make mencioun,
Entitled was al thus, as I shal telle,
'Tullius of the dreme of Scipioun';
Chapitres seven hit hadde, of hevene and helle,
And erthe, and soules that therinne dwelle,
Of whiche, as shortly as I can hit trete,
Of his sentence I wol you seyn the grete.

First telleth hit, whan Scipioun was come
In Afrik, how he mette Massinisse,
That him for Ioye in armes hath y nome.
Than telleth [hit] hir speche and al the blisse
That was betwix hem, til the day gan misse;
And how his auncestre, African so dere,
Gan in his slepe that night to him appere.

Than telleth hit that, fro a sterry place,
How African hath him Cartage shewed,
And warned him before of al his grace,
And seyde him, what man, lered other lewed,
That loveth comun profit, wel y-thewed,
He shal unto a blisful place wende,
Ther as Ioye is that last withouten ende.

Than asked he, if folk that heer be dede
Have lyf and dwelling in another place;
And African seyde, 'ye, withoute drede,'
And that our present worldes lyves space
Nis but a maner deth, what wey we trace,
And rightful folk shal go, after they dye,
To heven; and shewed him the galaxye.

Than shewed he him the litel erthe, that heer is,
At regard of the hevenes quantite;
And after shewed he him the nyne speres,
And after that the melodye herde he
That cometh of thilke speres thryes three,
That welle is of musyke and melodye
In this world heer, and cause of armonye.

Than bad he him, sin erthe was so lyte,
And ful of torment and of harde grace,
That he ne shulde him in the world delyte.
Than tolde he him, in certeyn yeres space,
That every sterre shulde come into his place

Ther hit was first; and al shulde out of minde
That in this worlde is don of al mankinde.

Than prayde him Scipioun to telle him al
The wey to come un-to that hevene blisse;
And he seyde, 'know thy-self first immortal,
And loke ay besily thou werke and wisse
To comun profit, and thou shalt nat misse
To comen swiftly to that place dere,
That ful of blisse is and of soules clere.

But brekers of the lawe, soth to seyne,
And lecherous folk, after that they be dede,
Shul alwey whirle aboute therthe in peyne,
Til many a world be passed, out of drede,
And than, for-yeven alle hir wikked dede,
Than shul they come unto that blisful place,
To which to comen god thee sende his grace!'—

The day gan failen, and the derke night,
That reveth bestes from hir besinesse, 86
Berafte me my book for lakke of light,
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse,
Fulfild of thought and besy hevinesse;
For bothe I hadde thing which that I nolde,
And eek I ne hadde that thing that I wolde.

But fynally my spirit, at the laste,
For-wery of my labour al the day,
Took rest, that made me to slepe faste,
And in my slepe I mette, as I lay, 95
How African, right in that selfe aray
That Scipioun him saw before that tyde,
Was comen, and stood right at my beddes syde.

The wery hunter, slepinge in his bed, 99
To wode ayein his minde goth anoon;
The Iuge dremeth how his plees ben sped;
The carter dremeth how his cartes goon;
The riche, of gold; the knight fight with his foon,
The seke met he drinketh of the tonne;
The lover met he hath his lady wonne.

Can I nat seyn if that the cause were 106
For I had red of African beforn,
That made me to mete that he stood there;
But thus seyde he, 'thou hast thee so wel born
In loking of myn olde book to-torn, 110
Of which Macrobie roghte nat a lyte,
That somdel of thy labour wolde I quyte!'—

Citherea! thou blisful lady swete,
That with thy fyr-brand dauntest whom thee lest, 114
And madest me this sweven for to mete,
Be thou my help in this, for thou mayst best;
As wisly as I saw thee north-north-west,
When I began my sweven for to wryte,
So yif me might to ryme hit and endyte!

The Story.

This forseid African me hente anoon,' 120
And forth with him unto a gate broghte
Right of a parke, walled with grene stoon;
And over the gate, with lettres large y-wroghte,
Ther weren vers y-writen, as me thoghte,
On eyther halfe, of ful gret difference,
Of which I shal yow sey the pleyn sentence. 126

'Thorgh me men goon in-to that blisful place
Of hertes hele and dedly woundes cure;
Thorgh me men goon unto the welle of Grace,
Ther grene and lusty May shal ever endure; 130
This is the wey to al good aventure;
Be glad, thou reder, and thy sorwe ofcaste,
Al open am I; passe in, and hy thee faste!'

'Thorgh me men goon,' than spak that other syde, 134
'Unto the mortal strokes of the spere,

Of which Disdayn and Daunger is the gyde,
Ther tree shal never fruyt ne leves bere.
This streem you ledeth to the sorwful were,
Ther as the fish in prison is al drye;
Theschewing is only the remedye.'

Thise vers of gold and blak y-writen were,
The whiche I gan a stounde to beholde,
For with that oon encresed ay my fere,
And with that other gan myn herte bolde;
That oon me hette, that other did me colde,
No wit had I, for errour, for to chese,
To entre or flee, or me to save or lese.

Right as, betwixen adamauntes two
Of even might, a pece of iren y-set,
That hath no might to meve to ne fro—
For what that on may hale, that other let—
Ferde I, that niste whether me was bet,
To entre or leve, til African my gyde
Me hente, and shoof in at the gates wyde,

And seyde, 'hit stondeth writen in thy face,
Thyn errour, though thou telle it not to me;
But dred thee nat to come in-to this place,
For this wryting is no-thing ment by thee,
Ne by noon, but he Loves servant be;
For thou of love hast lost thy tast, I gesse,
As seek man hath of swete and bitterneesse.

But natheles, al-though that thou be dulle,
Yit that thou canst not do, yit mayst thou see;
For many a man that may not stonde a pulle,
Yit lyketh him at the wrastling for to be,
And demeth yit wher he do bet or he;
And if thou haddest cunning for tendyte,
I shal thee shewen mater of to wryte.'

With that my hond in his he took anoon,
Of which I comfort caughte, and wente in faste;
But lord! so I was glad and wel begoon!
For over-al, wher that I myn eyen caste,
Were treës clad with leves that ay shal laste,
Eche in his kinde, of colour fresh and grene
As emeraude, that Ioye was to sene.

The bilder ook, and eek the hardy asshe;
The piler elm, the cofre unto careyne;
The boxtree piper; holm to whippes lasshe;
The sayling firr; the cipres, deth to pleyne;
The sheter ew, the asp for shaftes pleyne;
The olyve of pees, and eek the drunken vyne,
The victor palm, the laurer to devyne.

A garden saw I, ful of blosmy bowes,
Upon a river, in a grene mede,
Ther as that swetnesse evermore y-now is,
With floures whyte, blewe, yelowe, and rede;
And colde welle-stremes, no-thing dede,
That swommen ful of smale fisshes lighte,
With finnes rede and scales silver-brighte.

On every bough the briddes herde I singe,
With voys of aungel in hir armonye,
Som besyed hem hir briddes forth to bringe;
The litel conyes to hir pley gunne hye,
And further al aboute I gan espye
The dredful roo, the buk, the hert and hinde,
Squerels, and bestes smale of gentil kinde.

Of instruments of strenges in acord
Herde I so pleye a ravisshing swetnesse,
That god, that maker is of al and lord,
Ne herde never better, as I gesse;
Therwith a wind, unnethe hit might be lesse,
Made in the leves grene a noise softe
Acordant to the foules songe on-lofte.

The air of that place so attempre was
That never was grevaunce of hoot ne cold;
Ther wex eek every holsom spyce and gras,
Ne no man may ther wexe seek ne old;
Yet was ther Ioye more a thousand fold
Then man can telle; ne never wolde it nighte,
But ay cleer day to any mannes sighte.

Under a tree, besyde a welle, I say
Cupyde our lord his arwes forge and fyle;
And at his fete his bowe al redy lay,
And wel his doghter tempred al the whyle
The hedes in the welle, and with hir wyle
She couched hem after as they shulde serve,
Som for to slee, and som to wounde and kerve.

Tho was I war of Plesaunce anon-right,
And of Aray, and Lust, and Curtesye;
And of the Craft that can and hath the might
To doon by force a wight to do folye —
Disfigurat was she, I nil not lye;
And by him-self, under an oke, I gesse,
Sawe I Delyt, that stood with Gentilnesse.

I saw Beautee, withouten any atyr,
And Youthe, ful of game and Iolyte,
Fool-hardinesse, Flatery, and Desyr,
Messagerye, and Mede, and other three —
Hir names shul noght here be told for me —
And upon pilers grete of Iasper longe
I saw a temple of bras y-founded stronge.

Aboute the temple daunceden alway
Wommen y-nowe, of whiche somme ther were
Faire of hem-self, and somme of hem were gay;
In kirtels, al disshevele, wente they there —
That was hir office alwey, yeer by yere —
And on the temple, of doves whyte and faire
Saw I sittinge many a hundred paire.

Before the temple-dore ful soberly
Dame Pees sat, with a curteyn in hir hond;
And hir besyde, wonder discretly,
Dame Pacience sitting ther I fond
With face pale, upon an hille of sond;
And alder-next, within and eek with-oute,
Behest and Art, and of hir folke a route.

Within the temple, of syghes hote as fyr
I herde a swogh that gan aboute renne;
Which syghes were engendred with desyr,
That maden every auter for to brenne
Of newe flaume; and wel aspyed I thenne
That al the cause of sorwes that they drye
Com of the bitter goddesse Ialousye.

The god Priapus saw I, as I wente,
Within the temple, in soverayn place stonde,
In swich aray as whan the asse him shente
With crye by night, and with his ceptre in honde;
Ful besily men gunne assaye and fonde
Upon his hede to sette, of sondry hewe,
Garlondes ful of fresshe floures newe.

And in a privee corner, in disporte,
Fond I Venus and hir porter Richesse,
That was ful noble and hauteyn of hir porte;
Derk was that place, but afterward lightnesse
I saw a lyte, unnethe hit might be lesse,
And on a bed of golde she lay to reste,
Til that the hote sonne gan to weste.

Hir gilte heres with a golden threde
Y-bounden were, untressed as she lay,
And naked fro the breste unto the hede
Men might hir see; and, sothly for to say,
The remenant wel kevered to my pay
Right with a subtil kerchef of Valence,
Ther was no thikker cloth of no defence.

The place yaf a thousand savours swote,
And Bachus, god of wyn, sat hir besyde,
And Ceres next, that doth of hunger bote;

And, as I seide, amiddes lay Cipryde,
To whom on knees two yonge folkes cryde
To ben hir help; but thus I leet hir lye,
And ferther in the temple I gan espye

That, in dispyte of Diane the chaste,
Ful many a bowe y-broke heng on the wal
Of maydens, suche as gunne hir tymes waste
In hir servyse; and peynted over al
Of many a story, of which I touche shal
A fewe, as of Calixte and Athalaunte,
And many a mayde, of which the name I wante;

Semyramus, Candace, and Ercules,
Biblis, Dido, Tisbe and Piramus,
Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achilles,
Eleyne, Cleopatre, and Troilus,
Silla, and eek the moder of Romulus—
Alle these were peynted on that other syde,
And al hir love, and in what plyte they dyde.

Whan I was come ayen into the place
That I of spak, that was so swote and grene,
Forth welk I tho, my-selven to solace.
Tho was I war wher that ther sat a quene
That, as of light the somer-sonne shene
Passeth the sterre, right so over mesure
She fairer was than any creature.

And in a launde, upon an hille of floures,
Was set this noble goddesse Nature;
Of braunches were hir halles and hir boures,
Y-wrought after hir craft and hir mesure;
Ne ther nas foul that cometh of engendrure,
That they ne were prest in hir presence,
To take hir doom and yeve hir audience.

For this was on seynt Valentynes day,
Whan every foul cometh ther to chese his make,
Of every kinde, that men thenke may;
And that so huge a noyse gan they make,
That erthe and see, and tree, and every lake
So ful was, that unnethe was ther space
For me to stonde, so ful was al the place.

And right as Aleyn, in the Pleynt of Kinde,
Devyseth Nature of aray and face,
In swich aray men mighten hir ther finde.
This noble emperesse, ful of grace,
Bad every foul to take his owne place,
As they were wont alwey fro yeer to yere,
Seynt Valentynes day to stonden there.

That is to sey, the foules of ravyne
Were hyest set; and than the foules smale,
That eten as hem nature wolde enclyne,
As worm, or thing of whiche I telle no tale;
But water-foul sat lowest in the dale;
And foul that liveth by seed sat on the grene,
And that so fele, that wonder was to sene.

Ther mighte men the royal egle finde,
That with his sharpe look perceth the sonne;
And other egles of a lower kinde,
Of which that clerkes wel devysen conne.
Ther was the tyraunt with his fethres donne
And greye, I mene the goshauk, that doth pyne
To briddes for his outrageous ravyne.

The gentil faucon, that with his feet distreyneth
The kinges hond; the hardy sperhauk eke,
The quayles foo; the merlion that peyneth
Him-self ful ofte, the larke for to seke;
Ther was the douve, with hir eyen meke;
The Ialous swan, ayens his deth that singeth;
The oule eek, that of dethe the bode bringeth;

The crane the geaunt, with his trompes soune;
The theef, the chogh; and eek the Iangling pye;

The scorning Iay; the eles foo, the heroune;
The false lapwing, ful of trecherye;
The stare, that the counseyl can bewrye;
The tame ruddok; and the coward kyte;
The cok, that orloge is of thorpes lyte;

The sparow, Venus sone; the nightingale,
That clepeth forth the fresshe leves newe;
The swalow, mordrer of the flyës smale
That maken hony of floures fresshe of hewe;
The wedded turtel, with hir herte trewe;
The pecok, with his aungels fethres brighte;
The fesaunt, scorner of the cok by nighte;

The waker goos; the cukkow ever unkinde;
The popiniay, ful of delicasye;
The drake, stroyer of his owne kinde;
The stork, the wreker of avouterye;
The hote cormeraunt of glotonye;
The ravenwys, the crow with vois of care;
The throstel olde; the frosty feldefare.

What shulde I seyn? of foules every kinde
That in this worlde han fethres and stature,
Men mighten in that place assembled finde
Before the noble goddesse Nature.
And everich of hem did his besy cure
Benignely to chese or for to take,
By hir acord, his formel or his make.

But to the poynt — Nature held on hir honde
A formel egle, of shap the gentileste
That ever she among hir werkes fonde,
The most benigne and the goodlieste;
In hir was every vertu at his reste,
So ferforth, that Nature hir-self had blisse
To loke on hir, and ofte hir bek to kisse.

Nature, the vicaire of thalmyghty lorde,
That hoot, cold, hevy, light, [and] moist and dreye
Hath knit by even noumbre of acorde,
In esy vois began to speke and seye,
'Foules, tak hede of my sentence, I preye,
And, for your ese, in furthering of your nede,
As faste as I may speke, I wol me spede.

Ye know wel how, seynt Valentynes day,
By my statut and through my governaunce,
Ye come for to chese — and flee your way —
Your makes, as I prik yow with plesaunce.
But natheles, my rightful ordenaunce
May I not lete, for al this world to winne,
That he that most is worthy shal beginne.

The tercel egle, as that ye knowen wel,
The foul royal above yow in degree,
The wyse and worthy, secree, trewe as stel,
The which I formed have, as ye may see,
In every part as hit best lyketh me,
Hit nedeth noght his shap yow to devyse,
He shal first chese and speken in his gyse.

And after him, by order shul ye chese,
After your kinde, everich as yow lyketh,
And, as your hap is, shul ye winne or lese;
But which of yow that love most entryketh,
God sende him hir that sorest for him syketh.'
And therwith-al the tercel gan she calle,
And seyde, 'my sone, the choys is to thee falle.
But natheles, in this condicioun
Mot be the choys of everich that is here,
That she agree to his electcioun,
Who-so he be that shulde been hir fere;
This is our usage alwey, fro yeer to yere;
And who so may at this time have his grace,
In blisful tyme he com in-to this place.'

With hed enclyned and with ful humble chere
This royal tercel spak and taried nought;
'Unto my sovereyn lady, and noght my fere,

I chese, and chese with wille and herte and thought,
The formel on your hond so wel y-wrought,
Whos I am al and ever wol hir serve,
Do what hir list, to do me live or sterve.

Beseching hir of mercy and of grace,
As she that is my lady sovereyne;
Or let me dye present in this place.
For certes, long may I not live in peyne;
For in myn herte is corven every veyne;
Having reward only to my trouthe,
My dere herte, have on my wo som routhe.

And if that I to hir be founde untrewe,
Disobeysaunt, or wilful negligent,
Avauntour, or in proces love a newe,
I pray to you this be my Iugement,
That with these foules I be al to-rent,
That ilke day that ever she me finde
To hir untrewe, or in my gilte unkinde.

And sin that noon loveth hir so wel as I,
Al be she never of love me behette,
Than oghte she be myn thourgh hir mercy,
For other bond can I noon on hir knette.
For never, for no wo, ne shal I lette
To serven hir, how fer so that she wende;
Sey what yow list, my tale is at an ende.'

Right as the fresshe, rede rose newe
Ayen the somer-sonne coloured is,
Right so for shame al wexen gan the hewe
Of this formel, whan she herde al this;
She neyther answerde 'wel,' ne seyde amis,
So sore abasshed was she, til that Nature
Seyde, 'doghter, drede yow noght, I yow assure.'

Another tercel egle spak anoon
Of lower kinde, and seyde, 'that shal not be;
I love hir bet than ye do, by seynt Iohn,
Or atte leste I love hir as wel as ye;
And lenger have served hir, in my degree,
And if she shulde have loved for long loving,
To me allone had been the guerdoning.

I dar eek seye, if she me finde fals,
Unkinde, Iangler, or rebel any wyse,
Or Ialous, do me hongen by the hals!
And but I bere me in hir servyse
As wel as that my wit can me suffyse,
Fro poynt to poynt, hir honour for to save,
Tak she my lyf, and al the good I have.'

The thridde tercel egle answerde tho,
'Now, sirs, ye seen the litel leyser here;
For every foul cryeth out to been a-go
Forth with his make, or with his lady dere;
And eek Nature hir-self ne wol nought here,
For tarying here, noght half that I wolde seye;
And but I speke, I mot for sorwe deye.

Of long servyse avaunte I me no-thing,
But as possible is me to dye to-day
For wo, as he that hath ben languissh-ing
Thise twenty winter, and wel happen may
A man may serven bet and more to pay
In half a yere, al-though hit were no more,
Than som man doth that hath served ful yore.

I ne say not this by me, for I ne can
Do no servyse that may my lady plese;
But I dar seyn, I am hir trewest man
As to my dome, and feynest wolde hir ese;
At shorte wordes, til that deth me sese,
I wol ben hires, whether I wake or winke,
And trewe in al that herte may bethinke.'

Of al my lyf, sin that day I was born,
So gentil plee in love or other thing
Ne herde never no man me beforn,
Who-[so] that hadde leyser and cun-ning
For to reherse hir chere and hir spek-ing;
And from the morwe gan this speche laste
Til dounward drow the sonne wonder faste.

The noyse of foules for to ben delivered
So loude rong, 'have doon and let us wende!'
That wel wende I the wode had al to-shivered.
'Come of!' they cryde, 'allas! ye wil us shende!
Whan shal your cursed pleding have an ende?
How shulde a Iuge eyther party leve,
For yee or nay, with-outen any preve?'

The goos, the cokkow, and the doke also
So cryden 'kek, kek!' 'kukkow!' 'quek, quek!' hye,
That thorgh myn eres the noyse wente tho.
The goos seyde, 'al this nis not worth a flye!
But I can shape hereof a remedye,
And I wol sey my verdit faire and swythe
For water-foul, who-so be wrooth or blythe.'

'And I for worm-foul,' seyde the fool cukkow,
'For I wol, of myn owne auctorità,
For comune spede, take the charge now,
For to delivere us is gret charitè.'
'Ye may abyde a whyle yet, parde!'
Seide the turtel, 'if hit be your wille
A wight may speke, him were as good be stille.

I am a seed-foul, oon the unworthieste,
That wot I wel, and litel of kunninge;
But bet is that a wightes tonge reste
Than entremeten him of such doinge
Of which he neyther rede can nor singe.
And who-so doth, ful foule himself acloyeth,
For office uncommitted ofte anoyeth.'

Nature, which that alway had an ere
To murmour of the lewednes behinde,
With facound voys seide, 'hold your tonges there!
And I shal sone, I hope, a counseyl finde
You to delivere, and fro this noyse unbinde;
I Iuge, of every folk men shal oon calle
To seyn the verdit for you foules alle.'

Assented were to this conclusioun
The briddes alle; and foules of ravyne
Han chosen first, by pleyn electioun,
The tercelet of the faucon, to diffyne
Al hir sentence, and as him list, termyne;
And to Nature him gonnen to presente,
And she accepteth him with glad entente.

The tercelet seide than in this manere:
'Ful hard were hit to preve hit by resoun
Who loveth best this gentil formel here;
For everich hath swich replicacioun,
That noon by skilles may be broght a-doun;
I can not seen that arguments avayle;
Than semeth hit ther moste be batayle.'

'Al redy!' quod these egles tercels tho.
'Nay, sirs!' quod he, 'if that I dorste it seye,
Ye doon me wrong, my tale is not y-do!
For sirs, ne taketh noght a-gref, I preye,
It may noght gon, as ye wolde, in this weye;
Oure is the voys that han the charge in honde,
And to the Iuges dome ye moten stonde;

And therfor pees! I seye, as to my wit,
Me wolde thinke how that the worthieste
Of knighthode, and lengest hath used hit,
Moste of estat, of blode the gentileste,
Were sittingest for hir, if that hir leste;
And of these three she wot hir-self, I trowe,
Which that he be, for hit is light to knowe.'

The water-foules han her hedes leyd
Togeder, and of short avysement,
Whan everich had his large golee seyd,
They seyden sothly, al by oon assent,
How that 'the goos, with hir facounde gent,
That so desyreth to pronounce our nede,
Shal telle our tale,' and preyde 'god hir spede.'

And for these water-foules tho began
The goos to speke, and in hir cakelinge
She seyde, 'pees! now tak kepe every man,

And herkeneth which a reson I shal bringe;
My wit is sharp, I love no taryinge;
I seye, I rede him, though he were my brother,
But she wol love him, lat him love another!'

'Lo here! a parfit reson of a goos!'
Quod the sperhauk; 'never mot she thee!
Lo, swich hit is to have a tonge loos!
Now parde, fool, yet were hit bet for thee
Have holde thy pees, than shewed thy nycete!
Hit lyth not in his wit nor in his wille,
But sooth is seyd, "a fool can noght be stille."'

The laughter aroos of gentil foules alle,
And right anoon the seed-foul chosen hadde
The turtel trewe, and gunne hir to hem calle,
And preyden hir to seye the sothe sadde
Of this matere, and asked what she radde;
And she answerde, that pleynly hir entente
She wolde shewe, and sothly what she mente.

'Nay, god forbede a lover shulde chaunge!'
The turtel seyde, and wex for shame al reed;
'Thogh that his lady ever-more be straunge,
Yet let him serve hir ever, til he be deed;
For sothe, I preyse noght the gooses reed;
For thogh she deyed, I wolde non other make,
I wol ben hires, til that the deth me take.'

'Wel bourded!' quod the doke, 'by my hat!
That men shulde alwey loven, causeles,
Who can a reson finde or wit in that?
Daunceth he mury that is mirtheles?
Who shulde recche of that is reccheles?
Ye, quek!' yit quod the doke, ful wel and faire,
'There been mo sterres, god wot, than a paire!'

'Now fy, cherl!' quod the gentil tercelet,
'Out of the dunghil com that word ful right,
Thou canst noght see which thing is wel be-set:
Thou farest by love as oules doon by light;
The day hem blent, ful wel they see by night;
Thy kind is of so lowe a wrechednesse,
That what love is, thou canst nat see ne gesse.'

Tho gan the cukkow putte him forth in prees
For foul that eteth worm, and seide blyve,
'So I,' quod he, 'may have my make in pees,
I recche not how longe that ye stryve;
Lat ech of hem be soleyn al hir lyve,
This is my reed, sin they may not acorde;
This shorte lesson nedeth noght recorde.'

'Ye! have the glotoun fild ynogh his paunche,
Than are we wel!' seyde the merlioun;
'Thou mordrer of the heysugge on the braunche
That broghte thee forth, thou [rewthelees] glotoun!
Live thou soleyn, wormes corrupcioun!
For no fors is of lakke of thy nature;
Go, lewed be thou, whyl the world may dure!'

'Now pees,' quod Nature, 'I comaunde here;
For I have herd al your opinioun,
And in effect yet be we never the nere;
But fynally, this is my conclusioun,
That she hir-self shal han the eleccioun
Of whom hir list, who-so be wrooth or blythe,
Him that she cheest, he shal hir have as swythe.

For sith hit may not here discussed be
Who loveth hir best, as seide the tercelet,
Than wol I doon hir this favour, that she
Shal have right him on whom hir herte is set,

And he hir that his herte hath on hir knet.
This Iuge I, Nature, for I may not lyë;
To noon estat I have non other yë.

But as for counseyl for to chese a make,
If hit were reson, certes, than wolde I
Counseyle yow the royal tercel take,
As seide the tercelet ful skilfully,
As for the gentilest and most worthy,
Which I have wroght so wel to my plesaunce;
That to yow oghte been a suffisaunce.'

With dredful vois the formel hir answerde,
'My rightful lady, goddesse of Nature,
Soth is that I am ever under your yerde,
Lyk as is everiche other creature,
And moot be youres whyl my lyf may dure;
And therfor graunteth me my firste bone,
And myn entente I wol yow sey right sone.'

'I graunte it you,' quod she; and right anoon
This formel egle spak in this degree,
'Almighty quene, unto this yeer be doon
I aske respit for to avysen me.
And after that to have my choys al free;
This al and som, that I wolde speke and seye;
Ye gete no more, al-though ye do me deye.

I wol noght serven Venus ne Cupyde
For sothe as yet, by no manere wey.'
'Now sin it may non other wyse betyde,'
Quod tho Nature 'here is no more to sey;
Than wolde I that these foules were a-wey
Ech with his make, for tarying lenger here' —
And seyde hem thus, as ye shul after here.

'To you speke I, ye tercelets,' quod Nature,
'Beth of good herte and serveth, alle three;
A yeer is not so longe to endure,
And ech of yow peyne him, in his degree,
For to do wel; for, god wot, quit is she
Fro yow this yeer; what after so befalle,
This entremes is dressed for you alle.'

And whan this werk al broght was to an ende,
To every foule Nature yaf his make
By even acorde, and on hir wey they wende.
A! lord! the blisse and Ioye that they make!
For ech of hem gan other in winges take,
And with hir nekkes ech gan other winde,
Thanking alwey the noble goddesse of kinde.

But first were chosen foules for to singe,
As yeer by yere was alwey hir usaunce
To singe a roundel at hir departinge,
To do Nature honour and plesaunce.
The note, I trowe, maked was in Fraunce;
The wordes wer swich as ye may heer finde,
The nexte vers, as I now have in minde.

Qui bien aime a tard oublie.

'Now welcom somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres weders over-shake,
And driven awey the longe nightes blake!

Seynt Valentyn, that art ful hy on-lofte; —
Thus singen smale foules for thy sake —
Now welcom somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres weders over-shake.

Wel han they cause for to gladen ofte,
Sith ech of hem recovered hath his make;
Ful blisful may they singen whan they wake;
Now welcom somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres weders over-shake,
And driven awey the longe nightes blake.'

And with the showting, whan hir song was do,
That foules maden at hir flight a-way,
I wook, and other bokes took me to
To rede upon, and yet I rede alway;
I hope, y-wis, to rede so som day
That I shal mete som thing for to fare
The bet; and thus to rede I nil not spare.

Explicit tractatus de congregacione Volucrum die sancti Valentini.

VI. A COMPLEINT TO HIS LADY.

I. (*In seven-line stanzas.*)

THE longe night, whan every creature
Shulde have hir rest in somwhat, as by kinde,
Or elles ne may hir lyf nat long endure,
Hit falleth most in-to my woful minde
How I so fer have broght my-self behinde,
That, sauf the deeth, ther may no-thing me lisse,
So desespaired I am from alle blisse.

This same thoght me lasteth til the morwe,
And from the morwe forth til hit be eve;
Ther nedeth me no care for to porwe,
For bothe I have good leyser and good leve;
Ther is no wight that wol me wo bereve
To wepe y-nogh, and wailen al my fille;
The sore spark of peyne doth me spille.

II. (*In Terza Rima; imperfect.*)

[The sore spark of peyne doth me spille;]
This Love hath [eek] me set in swich a place
That my desyr [he] never wol fulfille;
For neither pitee, mercy, neither grace
Can I nat finde; and [fro] my sorwful herte,
For to be deed, I can hit nat arace.
The more I love, the more she doth me smerte;
Through which I see, with-oute remedye,
That from the deeth I may no wyse asterte;
[For this day in hir servise shal I dye].

III. (*In Terza Rima; imperfect.*)

[Thus am I slain, with sorwes ful dyverse;
Ful longe agoon I oghte have taken hede].
Now sothly, what she hight I wol reherse;
Hir name is Bountee, set in womanhede,
Sadnesse in youthe, and Beautee prydelees,
And Plesaunce, under governaunce and drede;
Hir surname eek is Faire Rewthelees,
The Wyse, y-knit un-to Good Aventure,
That, for I love hir, sleeth me giltelees.
Hir love I best, and shal, whyl I may dure,
Bet than my-self an hundred thousand deel,
Than al this worldes richesse or creature.
Now hath nat Lovë me bestowed weel
To lovë, ther I never shal have part?
Allas! right thus is turned me the wheel,
Thus am I slayn with loves fyry dart.
I can but love hir best, my swete fo;
Love hath me taught no more of his art
But serve alwey, and stinte for no wo.

IV. (*In ten-line stanzas.*)

[With]-in my trewe careful herte ther is
So moche wo, and [eek] so litel blis,
That wo is me that ever I was bore;
For al that thing which I desyre I mis,
And al that ever I wolde nat, I-wis,
That finde I redy to me evermore;
And of al this I not to whom me pleyne.
For she that mighte me out of this bringe
Ne reccheth nat whether I wepe or singe;
So litel rewthe hath she upon my peyne.

Allas! whan sleping-time is, than I wake,
Whan I shulde daunce, for fere than I quake;
[Yow rekketh never wher I flete or sinke;]
This hevy lyf I lede for your sake,

Thogh ye ther-of in no wyse hede take,
[For on my wo yow deyneth not to thinke.]
My hertes lady, and hool my lyves quene!
For trewly dorste I seye, as that I fele,
Me semeth that your swete herte of stele
Is whetted now ageynes me to kene.

My dere herte, and best beloved fo,
Why lyketh yow to do me al this wo,
What have I doon that greveth yow, or sayd,
But for I serve and love yow and no mo?
And whylst I live, I wol do ever so;
And therfor, swete, ne beth nat evil apayd.
For so good and so fair as [that] ye be,
Hit were [a] right gret wonder but ye hadde
Of alle servants, bothe goode and badde;
And leest worthy of alle hem, I am he.

But never-the-les, my righte lady swete,
Thogh that I be unconning and unmete
To serve as I best coude ay your hynesse,
Yit is ther fayner noon, that wolde I hete,
Than I, to do yow ese, or elles bete
What-so I wiste were to [yow distresse].
And hadde I might as good as I have wille,
Than shulde ye fele wher it wer so or noon;
For in this worlde living is ther noon
That fayner wolde your hertes wil fulfille.

For bothe I love, and eek dreed yow so sore,
And algates moot, and have doon yow, ful yore,
That bet loved is noon, ne never shal;
And yit I wolde beseche yow of no more
But leveth wel, and be nat wrooth therfore,
And lat me serve yow forth; lo! this is al.
For I am nat so hardy ne so wood
For to desire that ye shulde love me;
For wel I wot, allas! that may nat be;
I am so litel worthy, and ye so good.

For ye be oon the worthiest on-lyve,
And I the most unlykly for to thryve;
Yit, for al this, [now] witeth ye right wele,
That ye ne shul me from your service dryve
That I nil ay, with alle my wittes fyve,
Serve yow trewly, what wo so that I fele.
For I am set on yow in swich manere
That, thogh ye never wil upon me rewe,
I moste yow love, and ever been as trewe
As any can or may on-lyve [here].

The more that I love yow, goodly free,
The lasse fynde I that ye loven me;
Allas! whan shal that harde wit amende?
Wher is now al your wommanly pitee,
Your gentilesse and your debonairtee,
Wil ye no thing ther-of upon me spende?
And so hool, swete, as I am youres al,
And so gret wil as I have yow to serve,
Now, certes, and ye lete me thus sterve,
Yit have ye wonne ther-on but a smal.

For, at my knowing, I do no-thing why,
And this I wol beseche yow hertely,
That, ther ever ye finde, whyl ye live,
A trewer servant to yow than am I,
Leveth [me] thanne, and sleeth me hardely,
And I my deeth to you wol al forgive.
And if ye finde no trewer [man than me],
[Why] will ye suffre than that I thus spille,
And for no maner gilt but my good wille?
As good wer thanne untrewe as trewe to be.

But I, my lyf and deeth, to yow obeye,
And with right buxom herte hoolly I preye,
As [is] your moste plesure, so doth by me;
Wel lever is me lyken yow and deye

Than for to any thing or thinke or seye
That mighte yow offende in any tyme.
And therfor, swete, rewe on my peynes smerte,
And of your grace granteth me som drope;
For elles may me laste ne blis ne hope,
Ne dwellen in my trouble careful herte.

VII. ANELIDA AND ARCITE.

THE COMPLEYNT OF FEIRE ANELIDA AND FALS ARCITE.

Proem.

THOU ferse god of armes, Mars the rede,
That in the frosty country called Trace,
Within thy grisly temple ful of drede
Honoured art, as patroun of that place!
With thy Bellona, Pallas, ful of grace,
Be present, and my song continue and gye;
At my beginning thus to thee I crye.

For hit ful depe is sonken in my minde,
With pitous herte in English for tendyte
This olde storie, in Latin which I finde,
Of quene Anelida and fals Arcite;
That elde, which that al can frete and byte,
As hit hath freten mony a noble storie,
Hath nigh devoured out of our memorie.

Be favorable eek, thou Polymnia;
On Parnaso that, with thy sustres glade,
By Elicon, not fer from Cirrea,
Singest with vois memorial in the shade,
Under the laurer which that may not fade,
And do that I my ship to haven winne;
First folow I Stace, and after him Corinne.

The Story.

Iamque domos patrias, &c.; Statii Thebais, xii. 519.

Whan Theseus, with werres longe and grete,
The aspre folk of Cithe had over-come,
With laurer crouned, in his char gold-bete,
Hoom to his contre-houses is y-come; —
For which the peple blisful, al and somme,
So cryden, that unto the sterres hit wente,
And him to honouren dide al hir entente; —

Beforn this duk, in signe of hy victorie,
The trompes come, and in his baner large
The image of Mars; and, in token of glorie,
Men mighten seen of tresor many a charge,
Many a bright helm, and many a spere and targe,
Many a fresh knight, and many a blisful route,
On hors, on fote, in al the felde aboute.

Ipolita his wyf, the hardy quene
Of Cithia, that he conquered hadde,
With Emelye, hir yonge suster shene,
Faire in a char of golde he with him ladde,
That al the ground aboute hir char she spradde
With brightnesse of the beautee in hir face,
Fulfild of largesse and of alle grace.

With his triumphe and laurer-crouned thus,
In al the floure of fortunes yevinge,
Lete I this noble prince Theseus
Toward Athenes in his wey rydinge,
And founde I wol in shortly for to bringe
The slye wey of that I gan to wryte,
Of quene Anelida and fals Arcite.

Mars, which that through his furious course of yre,
The olde wrath of Iuno to fulfille,
Hath set the peples hertes bothe on fyre
Of Thebes and Grece, everich other to kille
With blody speres, ne rested never stille,
But throng now her, now ther, among hem bothe,
That everich other slough, so wer they wrothe.

For whan Amphiorax and Tydeus,
Ipomedon, Parthonopee also
Were dede, and slayn [was] proud Campaneus,
And whan the wrecches Thebans, bretheren two,
Were slayn, and king Adrastus hoom a-go,
So desolat stood Thebes and so bare,
That no wight coude remedie of his care.

And whan the olde Creon gan espye
How that the blood roial was broght adoun,
He held the cite by his tirannye,
And did the gentils of that regioun
To been his frendes, and dwellen in the toun.
So what for love of him, and what for awe,
The noble folk wer to the toune y-drawe.

Among al these, Anelida the quene
Of Ermony was in that toun dwellinge,
That fairer was then is the sonne shene;
Through-out the world so gan hir name springe,
That hir to seen had every wight lykinge;
For, as of trouthe, is ther noon hir liche,
Of al the women in this worlde riche.

Yong was this quene, of twenty yeer of elde,
Of midel stature, and of swich fairnesse,
That nature had a Ioye hir to behelde;
And for to speken of hir stedfastnesse,
She passed hath Penelope and Lucresse,
And shortly, if she shal be comprehended,
In hir ne mighte no-thing been amended.

This Theban knight [Arcite] eek, sooth to seyn,
Was yong, and ther-with-al a lusty knight,
But he was double in love and no-thing pleyn,
And subtil in that crafte over any wight,
And with his cunning wan this lady bright;
For so ferforth he gan hir trouthe assure,
That she him [trust] over any creature.

What shuld I seyn? she loved Arcite so,
That, whan that he was absent any throwe,
Anon hir thoghte hir herte brast a-two;
For in hir sight to hir he bar him lowe,
So that she wende have al his herte y-knowe;
But he was fals; it nas but feyned chere,
As nedeth not to men such craft to lere.

But never-the-les ful mikel besinesse
Had he, er that he mighte his lady winne,
And swoor he wolde dyen for distresse,
Or from his wit he seyde he wolde twinne.
Alas, the whyle! for hit was routhe and sinne,
That she upon his sorowes wolde rewe,
But no-thing thenketh the fals as doth the trewe.

Hir fredom fond Arcite in swich manere,
That al was his that she hath, moche or lyte,
Ne to no creature made she chere
Ferther than that hit lyked to Arcite;
Ther was no lak with which he mighte hir wyte,
She was so ferforth yeven him to plese,
That al that lyked him, hit did hir ese.

Ther nas to hir no maner lettre y-sent
That touched love, from any maner wight,
That she ne shewed hit him, er hit was brent;
So pleyn she was, and did hir fulle might,
That she nil hyden nothing from hir knight,
Lest he of any untrouthe hir upbreyde;
Withouten bode his heste she obeyde.

And eek he made him Ielous over here,
That, what that any man had to hir seyd,
Anoon he wolde preyen hir to swere
What was that word, or make him evel apayd;
Than wende she out of hir wit have brayd;
But al this nas but sleight and flaterye,
Withouten love he feyned Ielosye.

And al this took she so debonerly,
That al his wille, hir thoghte hit skilful thing,
And ever the lenger loved him tenderly,
And did him honour as he were a king.
Hir herte was wedded to him with a ring;
So ferforth upon trouthe is hir entente,

That wher he goth, hir herte with him wente.

Whan she shal ete, on him is so hir thoght,
That wel unnethe of mete took she keep;
And whan that she was to hir reste broght,
On him she thoghte alwey til that she sleep;
Whan he was absent, prevely she weep;
Thus liveth fair Anelida the quene
For fals Arcite, that did hir al this tene.

This fals Arcite, of his new-fangelnesse,
For she to him so lowly was and trewe,
Took lesse deyntee for hir stedfastnesse,
And saw another lady, proud and newe,
And right anon he cladde him in hir hewe —
Wot I not whether in whyte, rede, or grene —
And falsed fair Anelida the quene.

But never-the-les, gret wonder was hit noon
Thogh he wer fals, for hit is kinde of man,
Sith Lamek was, that is so longe agoon,
To been in love as fals as ever he can;
He was the firste fader that began
To loven two, and was in bigamye;
And he found tentes first, but-if men lye.

This fals Arcite sumwhat moste he feyne,
Whan he wex fals, to covere his traitorye,
Right as an hors, that can both byte and pleyne;
For he bar hir on honde of trecherye,
And swoor he coude hir doublenesse espye,
And al was falsnes that she to him mente;
Thus swoor this theef, and forth his way he wente.

Alas! what herte might enduren hit,
For routhe or wo, hir sorow for to telle?
Or what man hath the cunning or the wit?
Or what man might with-in the chambre dwelle,
If I to him rehersen shal the helle,
That suffreth fair Anelida the quene
For fals Arcite, that did hir al this tene?

She wepeth, waileth, swowneth pitously,
To grounde deed she falleth as a stoon;
Al crampissheth hir limes crokedly,
She speketh as hir wit were al agoon;
Other colour then asshen hath she noon,
Noon other word she speketh moche or lyte,
But 'mercy, cruel herte myn, Arcite!'

And thus endureth, til that she was so mate
That she ne hath foot on which she may sustene;
But forth languisshing ever in this estate,
Of which Arcite hath nother routhe ne tene;
His herte was elles-where, newe and grene,
That on hir wo ne deyneth him not to thinke,
Him rekketh never wher she flete or sinke.

His newe lady holdeth him so narowe
Up by the brydel, at the staves ende,
That every word, he dradde hit as an arowe;
Hir daunger made him bothe bowe and bende,
And as hir liste, made him turne or wende;
For she ne graunted him in hir livinge
No grace, why that he hath lust to singe;

But drof him forth, unnethe liste hir knowe
That he was servaunt to hir ladyshippe,
But lest that he wer proude, she held him lowe;
Thus serveth he, withouten fee or shipe,
She sent him now to londe, now to shippe;
And for she yaf him daunger al his fille,
Therfor she had him at hir owne wille.

Ensample of this, ye thrifty wimmen alle,
Take here Anelida and fals Arcite,
That for hir liste him 'dere herte' calle,
And was so meek, therfor he loved hir lyte;
The kinde of mannes herte is to delyte
In thing that straunge is, also god me save!

For what he may not gete, that wolde he have.

Now turne we to Anelida ageyn,
That pyneth day by day in languisshing;
But whan she saw that hir ne gat no geyn,
Upon a day, ful sorowfully weping,
She caste hir for to make a compleyning,
And with hir owne honde she gan hit wryte;
And sente hit to hir Theban knight Arcite.

THE COMPLEYNT OF ANELIDA THE QUENE UPON FALS ARCITE.

Proem.

So thirleth with the poynt of remembraunce,
The swerd of sorowe, y-whet with fals plesaunce,
Myn herte, bare of blis and blak of hewe,
That turned is in quaking al my daunce,
My suretee in a-whaped countenaunce;
Sith hit availeth not for to ben trewe;
For who-so trewest is, hit shal hir rewe,
That serveth love and doth hir observaunce
Alwey to oon, and chaungeth for no newe.

(*Strophe.*)

1. I wot my-self as wel as any wight;
For I loved oon with al my herte and might
More then my-self, an hundred thousand sythe,
And called him my hertes lyf, my knight,
And was al his, as fer as hit was right;
And whan that he was glad, than was I blythe,
And his disese was my deeth as swythe;
And he ayein his trouthe me had plight
For ever-more, his lady me to kythe.

2. Now is he fals, alas! and causeles,
And of my wo he is so routheles,
That with a worde him list not ones deyne
To bring ayein my sorowful herte in pees,
For he is caught up in a-nother lees.
Right as him list, he laugheth at my peyne,
And I ne can myn herte not restreyne,
That I ne love him alwey, never-theles;
And of al this I not to whom me pleyne.

3. And shal I pleyne — alas! the harde stounde —
Un-to my foo that yaf my herte a wounde,
And yet desyreth that myn harm be more?
Nay, certes! ferther wol I never founde
Non other help, my sores for to sounde.
My destinee hath shapen it ful yore;
I wil non other medecyne ne lore;
I wil ben ay ther I was ones bounde,
That I have seid, be seid for ever-more!

4. Alas! wher is become your gentillesse!
Your wordes fulle of plesaunce and humblesse?
Your observaunces in so low manere,
And your awayting and your besinesse
Upon me, that ye calden your maistresse,
Your sovereyn lady in this worlde here?
Alas! and is ther nother word ne chere
Ye vouchesauf upon myn hevinesse?
Alas! your love, I bye hit al to dere.

5. Now certes, swete, thogh that ye
Thus causeles the cause be
Of my dedly adversitee,
Your manly reson oghte it to respyte

To slee your frend, and namely me,
That never yet in no degree
Offended yow, as wisly he,
That al wot, out of wo my soule quyte!

¶ But for I shewed yow, Arcite,
Al that men wolde to me wryte,
And was so besy, yow to delyte —
My honour save — meke, kinde, and free,
Therfor ye putte on me the wyte,
And of me recche not a myte,
Thogh that the swerd of sorow byte
My woful herte through your crueltee.

6. My swete foo, why do ye so, for shame?
And thenke ye that furthered be your name,
To love a newe, and been untrewe? nay!
And putte yow in sclaunder now and blame,
And do to me adversitee and grame,
That love yow most, god, wel thou wost! alway?
Yet turn ayeyn, and be al pleyn som day,
And than shal this that now is mis be game,
And al for-yive, whyl that I live may.

(*Antistrophe.*)

1. Lo! herte myn, al this is for to seyne,
As whether shal I preye or elles pleyne?
Whiche is the wey to doon yow to be trewe?
For either mot I have yow in my cheyne,
Or with the dethe ye mot departe us tweyne;
Ther ben non other mene weyes newe;
For god so wisly on my soule rewe,
As verily ye sleen me with the peyne;
That may ye see unfeyned of myn hewe.

2. For thus ferforth have I my deth [y]-soght,
My-self I mordre with my prevy thoght;
For sorow and routhe of your unkindenesse
I wepe, I wake, I faste; al helpeth noght;
I weyve Ioy that is to speke of oght,
I voyde companye, I flee gladnesse;
Who may avaunte hir bet of hevinesse
Then I? and to this plyte have ye me broght,
Withoute gilt; me nedeth no witnesse.

3. And sholde I preye, and weyve womanhede?
Nay! rather deth then do so foul a dede,
And axe mercy gilteles! what nede?
And if I pleyne what lyf that I lede,
Yow rekketh not; that know I, out of drede;
And if I unto yow myn othes bede
For myn excuse, a scorn shal be my mede;
Your chere floureth, but hit wol not sede;
Ful longe agoon I oghte have take hede.

4. For thogh I hadde yow to-morow ageyn,
I might as wel holde Averill fro reyn,
As holde yow, to make yow stedfast.
Almighty god, of trouthe sovereyn,
Wher is the trouthe of man? who hath hit sleyn?
Who that hem loveth shal hem fynde as fast
As in a tempest is a roten mast.
Is that a tame best that is ay feyn
To renne away, when he is leest agast?

5. Now mercy, swete, if I misseye,
Have I seyd oght amis, I preye?
I not; my wit is al aweye.
I fare as doth the song of *Chaunte-pleure.*
For now I pleyne, and now I pleye,

I am so mased that I deye,
Arcite hath born awey the keye
Of al my worlde, and my good aventure!

¶ For in this worlde nis creature
Wakinge, in more discomfiture
Then I, ne more sorow endure;
And if I slepe a furlong-wey or tweye,
Than thinketh me, that your figure
Before me stant, clad in asure,
To profren eft a newe assure
For to be trewe, and mercy me to preye.

6. The longe night this wonder sight I drye,
And on the day for this afray I dye,
And of al this right noght, y-wis, ye recche.
Ne never mo myn yën two be drye,
And to your routhe and to your trouthe I crye.
But welawey! to fer be they to fecche;
Thus holdeth me my destinee a wrecche.
But me to rede out of this drede or gye

Ne may my wit, so weyk is hit, not strecche.

Conclusion.

Than ende I thus, sith I may do no more,
I yeve hit up for now and ever-more;
For I shal never eft putten in balaunce
My sekernes, ne lerne of love the lore.
But as the swan, I have herd seyd ful yore,
Ayeins his deth shal singe in his penaunce,
So singe I here my destiny or chaunce,
How that Arcite Anelida so sore
Hath thirled with the poynt of remembraunce!

The story continued.

Whan that Anelida this woful quene
Hath of hir hande writen in this wyse,
With face deed, betwixe pale and grene,
She fel a-swowe; and sith she gan to ryse,
And unto Mars avoweth sacrifyse
With-in the temple, with a sorowful chere,
That shapen was as ye shal after here.

(*Unfinished.*)

VIII. CHAUCERS WORDES UNTO ADAM, HIS OWNE SCRIVEYN.

ADAM scriveyn, if ever it thee bifalle
Boece or Troilus to wryten newe,
Under thy lokkes thou most have the scalle,
But after my making thou wryte trewe.
So ofte a daye I mot thy werk renew,
Hit to correcte and eek to rubbe and scrape;
And al is through thy negligence and rape.

IX. THE FORMER AGE.

A BLISFUL lyf, a paisible and a swete
Ledden the peples in the former age;
They helde hem payed of fruites, that they ete,
Which that the feldes yave hem by usage;
They ne were nat forpampred with outrage;

Unknowen was the quern and eek the melle;
They eten mast, hawes, and swich pounage,
And dronken water of the colde welle.

Yit nas the ground nat wounded with the plough,
But corn up-sprong, unsowe of mannes hond,
The which they gniden, and eete nat half y-nough.
No man yit knew the forwes of his lond;
No man the fyr out of the flint yit fond;
Un-korven and un-grobbed lay the vyne;
No man yit in the morter spyces grond
To clarre, ne to sause of galantyne.

No mader, welde, or wood no litestere
Ne knew; the flees was of his former hewe;
No flesh ne wiste offence of egge or spere;
No coyn ne knew man which was fals or trewe;
No ship yit karf the wawes grene and blewe;
No marchaunt yit ne fette outlandish ware;
No trompes for the werres folk ne knewe,
No toures heye, and walles rounde or square.

What sholde it han avayled to werreye?
Ther lay no profit, ther was no richesse,
But cursed was the tyme, I dar wel seye,
That men first dide hir swety busynesse
To grobbe up metal, lurkinge in darknesse,
And in the riveres first gemmes soghte.
Allas! than sprong up al the cursednesse
Of covetyse, that first our sorwe broghte!

Thise tyraunts putte hem gladly nat in pres,
No wildnesse, ne no busshes for to winne
Ther poverte is, as seith Diogenes,
Ther as vitaile is eek so skars and thinne
That noght but mast or apples is ther-inne.
But, ther as bagges been and fat vitaile,
Ther wol they gon, and spare for no sinne
With al hir ost the cite for tassaile.

Yit were no paleis-chaumbres, ne non halles;
In caves and [in] wodes softe and swete
Slepten this blissed folk with-oute walles,
On gras or leves in parfit quiete.
No doun of fetheres, ne no bleched shete
Was kid to hem, but in seurtee they slepte;
Hir hertes were al oon, with-oute galles,
Everich of hem his feith to other kepte.

Unforged was the hauberk and the plate;
The lambish peple, voyd of alle vyce,
Hadden no fantasye to debate,
But ech of hem wolde other wel cheryce;
No pryde, non envye, non avaryce,
No lord, no taylage by no tyrannye;
Humblesse and pees, good feith, the emperice,
[Fulfilled erthe of olde curtesye.]

Yit was not Iupiter the likerous,
That first was fader of delicacye,
Come in this world; ne Nembrot, desirous
To reynen, had nat maad his toures hye.
Allas, allas! now may men wepe and crye!
For in our dayes nis but covetyse
[And] doublenesse, and tresoun and envye,
Poysoun, manslauhtre, and mordre in sondry wyse.

Finit Etas prima. Chaucers.

X. FORTUNE.

Balades de visage sanz peinture.

I. Le Pleintif countre Fortune.

This wrecched worldes transmutacioun,
As wele or wo, now povre and now honour,
With-outen ordre or wys discrecioun
Governed is by Fortunes errour;
But natheles, the lak of hir favour
Ne may nat don me singen, though I dye,
'Iay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour:'
For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye!

Yit is me left the light of my resoun,
To knowen frend fro fo in thy mirour. 10
So muche hath yit thy whirling up and doun
Y-taught me for to knowen in an hour.
But trewely, no force of thy reddour
To him that over him-self hath the maystrye!
My suffisaunce shal be my socour! 15
For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye!

O Socrates, thou stedfast champioun,
She never mighte be thy tormentour;
Thou never dreddest hir oppressioun,
Ne in hir chere founde thou no savour. 20
Thou knewe wel deceit of hir colour,
And that hir moste worshipe is to lye.
I knowe hir eek a fals dissimulour:
For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye!

II. La respounse de Fortune au Pleintif.

No man is wrecched, but him-self hit wene, 25
And he that hath him-self hath suffisaunce.
Why seystow thanne I am to thee so kene,
That hast thy-self out of my governaunce?
Sey thus: 'Graunt mercy of thyn haboundaunce
That thou hast lent or this.' Why wolt thou stryve? 30
What wostow yit, how I thee wol avaunce?
And eek thou hast thy beste frend alyve!

I have thee taught divisioun bi-twene
Frend of effect, and frend of countenaunce; 34
Thee nedeth nat the galle of noon hyene,
That cureth eyen derke fro hir penaunce;
Now seestow cleer, that were in ignoraunce.
Yit halt thyn ancre, and yit thou mayst arryve
Ther bountee berth the keye of my substaunce:
And eek thou hast thy beste frend alyve.

How many have I refused to sustene, 41
Sin I thee fostred have in thy plesaunce!
Woltow than make a statut on thy quene
That I shal been ay at thyn ordinaunce?
Thou born art in my regne of variaunce,
Aboute the wheel with other most thou dryve. 46
My lore is bet than wikke is thy grevaunce,
And eek thou hast thy beste frend alyve.

III. La respounse du Pleintif countre Fortune.

Thy lore I dampne, hit is adversitee.
My frend maystow nat reven, blind goddesse! 50
That I thy frendes knowe, I thanke hit thee.
Tak hem agayn, lat hem go lye on presse!
The negardye in keping hir richesse
Prenostik is thou wolt hir tour assayle;
Wikke appetyt comth ay before seknesse: 55
In general, this reule may nat fayle.

La respounse de Fortune countre le Pleintif.

Thou pinchest at my mutabilitee,
For I thee lente a drop of my richesse,
And now me lyketh to with-drawe me.
Why sholdestow my realtee oppresse? 60
The see may ebbe and flowen more or lesse;
The welkne hath might to shyne, reyne, or hayle;
Right so mot I kythen my brotelnesse.
In general, this reule may nat fayle.

Lo, thexecucion of the magestee 65
That al purveyeth of his rightwisnesse,
That same thing 'Fortune' clepen ye,
Ye blinde bestes, full of lewednesse!
The hevene hath propretee of sikernesse,
This world hath ever resteles travayle;
Thy laste day is ende of myn intresse: 71
In general, this reule may nat fayle.

Lenvoy de Fortune.

Princes, I prey you of your gentilesse,
Lat nat this man on me thus crye and pleyne,
And I shall quyte you your bisinesse 75
At my requeste, as three of you or tweyne;
And, but you list releve him of his peyne,
Preyeth his beste frend, of his noblesse,
That to som beter estat he may atteyne.

Explicit.

XI. MERCILES BEAUTE: A TRIPLE ROUNDEL.

I. Captivity.

YOUR yën two wol slee me sodenly,
I may the beautè of hem not sustene,
So woundeth hit through-out my herte kene.

And but your word wol helen hastily
My hertes wounde, whyl that hit is grene,
Your yën two wol slee me sodenly,
I may the beautè of hem not sustene.

Upon my trouthe I sey yow feithfully,
That ye ben of my lyf and deeth the quene;
For with my deeth the trouthe shal be sene.
Your yën two wol slee me sodenly,
I may the beautè of hem not sustene,
So woundeth hit through-out my herte kene.

II. Rejection.

So hath your beautè fro your herte chaced
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne;
For Daunger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

Giltles my deeth thus han ye me purchaced;
I sey yow sooth, me nedeth not to feyne;
So hath your beautè fro your herte chaced
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne.

Allas! that nature hath in yow compassed
So greet beautè, that no man may atteyne
To mercy, though he sterve for the peyne.
So hath your beautè fro your herte chaced
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne;
For Daunger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

III. Escape.

Sin I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.

He may answere, and seye this or that;
I do no fors, I speke right as I mene.
Sin I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene.

Love hath my name y-strike out of his sclat,
And he is strike out of my bokes clene
For ever-mo; [ther] is non other mene.
Sin I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.

Explicit.

XII. TO ROSEMOUNDE. A BALADE.

MADAME, ye ben of al beautè shryne
As fer as cercled is the mappemounde;
For as the cristal glorious ye shyne,
And lyke ruby ben your chekes rounde.
Therwith ye ben so mery and so iocounde,
That at a revel whan that I see you daunce,
It is an oynement unto my wounde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

For thogh I wepe of teres ful a tyne,
Yet may that wo myn herte nat confounde;
Your seemly voys that ye so smal out-twyne
Maketh my thoght in Ioye and blis. habounde.
So curteisly I go, with lovë bounde,
That to my-self I sey, in my penaunce,

Suffyseth me to love you, Rosemounde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

Nas never pyk walwed in galauntyne
As I in love am walwed and y-wounde;
For which ful ofte I of my-self divyne
That I am trewe Tristam the secounde.
My love may not refreyd be nor afounde;
I brenne ay in an amorous plesaunce.
Do what you list, I wil your thral be founde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

Tregentil. *Chaucer.*

XIII. TRUTH.

BALADE DE BON CONSEYL.

FLEE fro the prees, and dwelle with sothfastnesse,
Suffyce unto thy good, though hit be smal;
For hord hath hate, and climbing tikelnesse,
Prees hath envye, and wele blent overal;
Savour no more than thee bihove shal;
Werk wel thy-self, that other folk canst rede;
And trouthe shal delivere, hit is no drede.

Tempest thee noght al croked to redresse,
In trust of hir that turneth as a bal:
Gret reste stant in litel besinesse;
And eek be war to sporne ageyn an al;
Stryve noght, as doth the crokke with the wal.
Daunte thy-self, that dauntest otheres dede;
And trouthe shal delivere, hit is no drede.

That thee is sent, receyve in buxumnesse,
The wrastling for this worlde axeth a fal.
Her nis non hoom, her nis but wildernesse:
Forth, pilgrim, forth! Forth, beste, out of thy stal!
Know thy contree, look up, thank God of al;
Hold the hye wey, and lat thy gost thee lede:
Aud trouthe shal delivere, hit is no drede.

ENVOY.

Therfore, thou vache, leve thyn old wrecchednesse
Unto the worlde; leve now to be thral;
Crye him mercy, that of his hy goodnesse
Made thee of noght, and in especial
Draw unto him, and pray in general
For thee, and eek for other, hevenlich mede;
And trouthe shal delivere, hit is no drede.

Explicit Le bon counseill de G. Chaucer.

XIV. GENTILESSE.

MORAL BALADE OF CHAUCER.

THE firste stok, fader of gentilesse —
What man that claymeth gentil for to be,
Must folowe his trace, and alle his wittes dresse
Vertu to sewe, and vyces for to flee.
For unto vertu longeth dignitee,
And noght the revers, saufly dar I deme,
Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

This firste stok was ful of rightwisnesse,
Trewe of his word, sobre, pitous, and free,
Clene of his goste, and loved besinesse,
Ageinst the vyce of slouthe, in honestee;
And, but his heir love vertu, as dide he,
He is noght gentil, thogh he riche seme,
Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

Vyce may wel be heir to old richesse;

But ther may no man, as men may wel see,
Bequethe his heir his vertuous noblesse;
That is appropred unto no degree,
But to the firste fader in magestee,
That maketh him his heir, that can him queme,
Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

XV. LAK OF STEDFASTNESSE.

Balade.

Som tyme this world was so stedfast and stable
That mannes word was obligacioun,
And now hit is so fals and deceivable,
That word and deed, as in conclusioun,
Ben no-thing lyk, for turned up so doun
Is al this world for mede and wilfulnesse,
That al is lost for lak of stedfastnesse.

What maketh this world to be so variable
But lust that folk have in dissensioun?
Among us now a man is holde unable,
But-if he can, by som collusioun,
Don his neighbour wrong or oppressioun.
What causeth this, but wilful wrecchednesse,
That al is lost, for lak of stedfastnesse?

Trouthe is put doun, resoun is holden fable;
Vertu hath now no dominacioun,
Pitee exyled, no man is merciable.
Through covetyse is blent discrecioun;
The world hath mad a permutacioun
Fro right to wrong, fro trouthe to fikelnesse,
That al is lost, for lak of stedfastnesse.

Lenvoy to King Richard.

O prince, desyre to be honourable,
Cherish thy folk and hate extorcioun!
Suffre no thing, that may be reprevable
To thyn estat, don in thy regioun.
Shew forth thy swerd of castigacioun,
Dred God, do law, love trouthe and worthinesse,
And wed thy folk agein to stedfastnesse.

Explicit.

XVI. LENVOY DE CHAUCER A SCOGAN.

To-broken been the status hye in hevene
That creat were eternally to dure,
Sith that I see the brighte goddes sevene
Mow wepe and wayle, and passioun endure,
As may in erthe a mortal creature.
Allas, fro whennes may this thing procede?
Of whiche errour I deye almost for drede.

By worde eterne whylom was hit shape
That fro the fifte cercle, in no manere,
Ne mighte a drope of teres doun escape.
But now so wepeth Venus in hir spere,
That with hir teres she wol drenche us here.
Allas, Scogan! this is for thyn offence!
Thou causest this deluge of pestilence,

Hast thou not seyd, in blaspheme of this goddes,
Through pryde, or through thy grete rakelnesse,
Swich thing as in the lawe of love forbode is?
That, for thy lady saw nat thy distresse,
Therfor thou yave hir up at Michelmesse!
Allas, Scogan! of olde folk ne yonge
Was never erst Scogan blamed for his tonge!

Thou drowe in scorn Cupyde eek to record
Of thilke rebel word that thou hast spoken,

For which he wol no lenger be thy lord.
And, Scogan, thogh his howe be nat broken,
He wol nat with his arwes been y-wroken
On thee, ne me, ne noon of our figure;
We shul of him have neyther hurt ne cure.

Now certes, frend, I drede of thyn unhappe,
Lest for thy gilt the wreche of Love procede
On alle hem that ben hore and rounde of shape,
That ben so lykly folk in love to spede.
Than shul we for our labour han no mede;
But wel I wot, thou wilt answere and seye:
'Lo! olde Grisel list to ryme and pleye!'

Nay, Scogan, sey not so, for I mexcuse,
God help me so! in no rym, doutelees,
Ne thinke I never of slepe wak my muse,
That rusteth in my shethe stille in pees.
Whyl I was yong, I putte hir forth in prees,
But al shal passe that men prose or ryme;
Take every man his turn, as for his tyme.

ENVOY.

Scogan, that knelest at the stremes heed
Of grace, of alle honour and worthinesse,
In thende of which streme I am dul as deed,
Forgete in solitarie wildernesse;
Yet, Scogan, thenke on Tullius kindenesse,
Minne thy frend, ther it may fructifye!
Far-wel, and lok thou never eft Love defye!

XVII. LENVOY DE CHAUCER A BUKTON.

THE COUNSEIL OF CHAUCER TOUCHING MARIAGE, WHICH WAS SENT TO BUKTON.

MY maister Bukton, whan of Criste our kinge
Was axed, what is trouthe or sothfastnesse,
He nat a word answerde to that axinge,
As who saith: 'no man is al trewe,' I gesse.
And therfor, thogh I highte to expresse
The sorwe and wo that is in mariage,
I dar not wryte of hit no wikkednesse,
Lest I my-self falle eft in swich dotage.

I wol nat seyn, how that hit is the cheyne
Of Sathanas, on which he gnaweth ever,
But I dar seyn, were he out of his peyne,
As by his wille, he wolde be bounde never.
But thilke doted fool that eft hath lever
Y-cheyned be than out of prisoun crepe,
God lete him never fro his wo dissever,
Ne no man him bewayle, though he wepe.

But yit, lest thou do worse, tak a wyf;
Bet is to wedde, than brenne in worse wyse.
But thou shalt have sorwe on thy flesh, thy lyf,
And been thy wyves thral, as seyn these wyse,
And if that holy writ may nat suffyse,
Experience shal thee teche, so may happe,
That thee were lever to be take in Fryse
Than eft to falle of wedding in the trappe.

ENVOY.

This litel writ, proverbes, or figure
I sende you, tak kepe of hit, I rede:
Unwys is he that can no wele endure.
If thou be siker, put thee nat in drede.
The Wyf of Bathe I pray you that ye rede
Of this matere that we have on honde.
God graunte you your lyf frely to lede
In fredom; for ful hard is to be bonde.

Explicit.

XVIII. THE COMPLEYNT OF VENUS.

I. (The Lover's worthiness.)

Ther nis so hy comfort to my plesaunce,
Whan that I am in any hevinesse,
As for to have leyser of remembraunce
Upon the manhod and the worthinesse,
Upon the trouthe, and on the stedfastnesse
Of him whos I am al, whyl I may dure;
Ther oghte blame me no creature,
For every wight preiseth his gentilesse.

In him is bountee, wisdom, governaunce
Wel more then any mannes wit can gesse;
For grace hath wold so ferforth him avaunce
That of knighthode he is parfit richesse.
Honour honoureth him for his noblesse;
Therto so wel hath formed him Nature,
That I am his for ever, I him assure,
For every wight preiseth his gentilesse.

And not-withstanding al his suffisaunce,
His gentil herte is of so greet humblesse
To me in worde, in werke, in contenaunce,
And me to serve is al his besinesse,
That I am set in verrey sikernesse.
Thus oghte I blesse wel myn aventure,
Sith that him list me serven and honoure;
For every wight preiseth his gentilesse.

II. (Disquietude caused by Jealousy.)

Now certes, Love, hit is right covenable
That men ful dere bye thy noble thing,
As wake a-bedde, and fasten at the table,
Weping to laughe, and singe in compleyning,
And doun to caste visage and loking,
Often to chaungen hewe and contenaunce,
Pleyne in sleping, and dremen at the daunce,
Al the revers of any glad feling.

Ialousye be hanged by a cable!
She wolde al knowe through hir espying;
Ther doth no wight no-thing so reasonable,
That al nis harm in hir imagening.
Thus dere abought is love in yeving,
Which ofte he yiveth with-outen ordinaunce,
As sorow ynogh, and litel of plesaunce,
Al the revers of any glad feling.

A litel tyme his yift is agreable,
But ful encomberous is the using;
For sotel Ialousye, the deeyvable,
Ful often-tyme causeth destourbing.
Thus be we ever in drede and suffering,
In nouncerteyn we languisshe in penaunce,
And han ful often many an hard meschaunce,
Al the revers of any glad feling.

III. (Satisfaction in Constancy.)

But certes, Love, I sey nat in such wyse
That for tescape out of your lace I mente;
For I so longe have been in your servyse
That for to lete of wol I never assente;
No force thogh Ialousye me tormente;
Suffyceth me to see him whan I may,
And therfore certes, to myn ending-day
To love him best ne shal I never repente.

And certes, Love, whan I me wel avyse
On any estat that man may represente,
Than have ye maked me, through your franchyse,
Chese the best that ever on erthe wente.
Now love wel, herte, and look thou never stente;
And let the Ielous putte hit in assay
That, for no peyne wol I nat sey nay;
To love him best ne shal I never repente.

Herte, to thee hit oghte y-nogh suffyse,
That Love so hy a grace to thee sente,
To chese the worthiest in alle wyse
And most agreable unto myn entente.
Seche no ferther, neyther wey ne wente,
Sith I have suffisaunce unto my pay.

Thus wol I ende this compleynt or lay;
To love him best ne shal I never repente.

LENVOY.

Princess, receyveth this compleynt in gree,
Unto your excellent benignitee
Direct after my litel suffisaunce.
For eld, that in my spirit dulleth me,
Hath of endyting al the soteltee
Wel ny bereft out of my remembraunce;
And eek to me hit is a greet penaunce,
Sith rym in English hath swich scarsitee,
To folowe word by word the curiositee
Of Graunson, flour of hem that make in Fraunce.

XIX. THE COMPLEINT OF CHAUCER TO HIS EMPTY PURSE.

To you, my purse, and to non other wight
Compleyne I, for ye be my lady dere!
I am so sory, now that ye be light;
For certes, but ye make me hevy chere,
Me were as leef be leyd up-on my bere;
For whiche un-to your mercy thus I crye:
Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye!

Now voucheth sauf this day, or hit be night,
That I of you the blisful soun may here,
Or see your colour lyk the sonne bright,
That of yelownesse hadde never pere.
Ye be my lyf, ye be myn hertes stere,
Quene of comfort and of good companye:
Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye!

Now purs, that be to me my lyves light,
And saveour, as doun in this worlde here,
Out of this toune help me through your might,
Sin that ye wole nat been my tresorere;
For I am shave as nye as any frere.
But yit I pray un-to your curtesye:
Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye!

LENVOY DE CHAUCER.

O conquerour of Brutes Albioun!
Which that by lyne and free eleccioun
Ben verray king, this song to you I sende;
And ye, that mowen al our harm amende,
Have minde up-on my supplicacioun!

XX. PROVERBS.

PROVERBE OF CHAUCER.

I.

WHAT shul thise clothes many-fold,
Lo! this hote somers day?—
After greet heet cometh cold;
No man caste his pilche away.

II.

Of al this world the wyde compas
Hit wol not in myn armes tweyne.—
Who-so mochel wol embrace
Litel therof he shal distreyne.

[*The following Poems are also probably genuine; but lack external evidence.*]

XXI. AGAINST WOMEN UNCONSTANT.

BALADE.

MADAME, for your newe-fangelnesse,
Many a servaunt have ye put out of grace,
I take my leve of your unstedfastnesse,
For wel I wot, whyl ye have lyves space,
Ye can not love ful half yeer in a place;
To newe thing your lust is ever kene;
In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene.

Right as a mirour nothing may empresse,
But, lightly as it cometh, so mot it pace,
So fareth your love, your werkes bereth witnesse.
Ther is no feith that may your herte enbrace;
But, as a wedercok, that turneth his face
With every wind, ye fare, and that is sene;
In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene.

Ye might be shryned, for your brotelnesse,
Bet than Dalyda, Creseide or Candace;
For ever in chaunging stant your sikernesse,
That tache may no wight fro your herte arace;
If ye lese oon, ye can wel tweyn purchace;
Al light for somer, ye woot wel what I mene,
In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene.

Explicit.

XXII. AN AMOROUS COMPLEINT. (COMPLEINT DAMOURS.)

AN AMOROUS COMPLEINT, MADE AT WINDSOR.

I, WHICH that am the sorwefulleste man
That in this world was ever yit livinge,
And leest recoverer of him-selven can,
Beginne thus my deedly compleininge
On hir, that may to lyf and deeth me bringe,
Which hath on me no mercy ne no rewthe
That love hir best, but sleeth me for my trewthe.

Can I noght doon ne seye that may yow lyke,
[For] certes, now, allas! allas! the whyle!
Your plesaunce is to laughen whan I syke,
And thus ye me from al my blisse exyle.
Ye han me cast in thilke spitous yle
Ther never man on lyve mighte asterte;
This have I for I lovë you, swete herte!

Sooth is, that wel I woot, by lyklinesse,
If that it were thing possible to do
Tacompte youre beutee and goodnesse,
I have no wonder thogh ye do me wo;
Sith I, thunworthiest that may ryde or go,
Durste ever thinken in so hy a place,
What wonder is, thogh ye do me no grace?

Allas! thus is my lyf brought to an ende,
My deeth, I see, is my conclusioun;
I may wel singe, 'in sory tyme I spende
My lyf;' that song may have confusioun!
For mercy, pitee, and deep affeccioun,
I sey for me, for al my deedly chere,
Alle thise diden, in that, me love yow dere.

And in this wyse and in dispayre I live
In lovë; nay, but in dispayre I dye!

But shal I thus [to] yow my deeth forgive,
That causeles doth me this sorow drye?
Ye, certes, I! For she of my folye
Hath nought to done, although she do me sterve;
Hit is nat with hir wil that I hir serve!

Than sith I am of my sorowe the cause
And sith that I have this, withoute hir reed,
Than may I seyn, right shortly in a clause,
It is no blame unto hir womanheed
Though swich a wrecche as I be for hir deed;
[And] yet alwey two thinges doon me dyë,
That is to seyn, hir beutee and myn yë.

So that, algates, she is the verray rote
Of my disese, and of my dethe also;
For with oon word she mighte be my bote,
If that she vouched sauf for to do so.
But [why] than is hir gladnesse at my wo?
It is hir wone pleasaunce for to take,
To seen hir servaunts dyen for hir sake!

But certes, than is al my wonderinge,
Sithen she is the fayrest creature
As to my dome, that ever was livinge,
The benignest and beste eek that nature
Hath wrought or shal, whyl that the world may dure,
Why that she lefte pite so behinde?
It was, y-wis, a greet defaute in kinde.

Yit is al this no lak to hir, pardee,
But god or nature sore wolde I blame;
For, though she shewe no pite unto me,
Sithen that she doth othere men the same,
I ne oughte to despyse my ladies game;
It is hir pley to laughen whan men syketh,
And I assente, al that hir list and lyketh!

Yit wolde I, as I dar, with sorweful herte
Biseche un-to your meke womanhede
That I now dorste my sharpe sorwes smerte
Shewe by worde, that ye wolde ones rede
The pleynte of me, the which ful sore drede
That I have seid here, through myn unconninge,
In any worde to your displesinge.

Lothest of anything that ever was loth
Were me, as wisly god my soule save!
To seyn a thing through which ye might be wroth;
And, to that day that I be leyd in grave,
A trewer servaunt shulle ye never have;
And, though that I on yow have pleyned here,
Forgiveth it me, myn owne lady dere!

Ever have I been, and shal, how-so I wende,
Outher to live or dye, your humble trewe;
Ye been to me my ginning and myn ende,
Sonne of the sterre bright and clere of hewe,
Alwey in oon to love yow freshly newe,
By god and by my trouthe, is myn entente;
To live or dye, I wol it never repente!

This compleynt on seint Valentynes day,
Whan every foul [ther] chesen shal his make,
To hir, whos I am hool, and shal alwey,
This woful song and this compleynt I make,
That never yit wolde me to mercy take;
And yit wol I [for] evermore her serve
And love hir best, although she do me sterve.

Explicit.

XXIII. A BALADE OF COMPLEYNT.

COMPLEYNE ne coude, ne might myn herte never
My peynes halve, ne what torment I have,
Though that I sholde in your presence ben ever,
My hertes lady, as wisly he me save
That bountee made, and beutee list to grave
In your persone, and bad hem bothe in-fere
Ever tawayte, and ay be wher ye were.

As wisly he gye alle my Ioyes here
As I am youres, and to yow sad and trewe
And ye, my lyf and cause of my good chere,
And deeth also, whan ye my peynes newe,
My worldes Ioye, whom I wol serve and sewe,
My heven hool, and al my suffisaunce,
Whom for to serve is set al my plesaunce.

Beseching yow in my most humble wyse
Taccepte in worth this litel povre dyte,
And for my trouthe my service nat despyse,
Myn observaunce eek have nat in despyte,
Ne yit to long to suffren in this plyte,
I yow besech, myn hertes lady dere,
Sith I yow serve, and so wil yeer by yere.

XXIV. WOMANLY NOBLESSE.

BALADE THAT CHAUCIER MADE.

So hath my herte caught in rémembraunce
Your beautè hool, and stedfast governaunce,
Your vertues allè, and your hy noblesse,
That you to serve is set al my plesaunce;
So wel me lykth your womanly contenaunce,
Your fresshe fetures and your comlinesse,
That, whyl I live, my herte to his maistresse,
You hath ful chose, in trew perséveraunce,
Never to chaunge, for no maner distresse.

And sith I [you] shal do this observaunce
Al my lyf, withouten displesaunce,
You for to serve with al my besinesse,
[Taketh me, lady, in your obeisaunce,]
And have me somwhat in your souvenaunce.
My woful herte suffreth greet duresse;
And [loke] how humbl[el]y, with al simplesse,
My wil I cónforme to your ordenaunce,
As you best list, my peynes to redresse.

Considring eek how I hange in balaunce
In your servysè; swich, lo! is my chaunce,
Abyding grace, whan that your gentilnesse
Of my gret wo list doon allegeaunce,
And with your pitè me som wyse avaunce,
In ful rebating of my hevinesse;
And thinkth, by reson, wommanly noblesse
Shuld nat desyre for to doon outrance
Ther-as she findeth noon unbuxumnesse.

LENVOYE.

Auctour of norture, lady of plesaunce,
Soveraine of beautè, flour of wommanhede,
Take ye mon hede unto myn ignoraunce,
But this receyveth of your goodlihede,
Thinking that I have caught in rémembraunce
Your beautè hool, your stedfast governaunce.

XXV. COMPLAINT TO MY MORTAL FOE.

AL hoolly youres, withouten otheres part!
Wherefore? y-wis, that I ne can ne may
My service chaungen; thus of al suche art
The lerninge I desyre for ever and ay.
And evermore, whyl that I live may,
In trouthe I wol your servante stille abyde,
Although my wo encresè day by day,
Til that to me be come the dethes tyde.

Seint Valentyne! to you I rénovele
My woful lyf, as I can, compleyninge;
But, as me thinketh, to you a quarele
Right greet I have, whan I, rememberinge
Bitwene, how kinde, ayeins the yeres springe,
Upon your day, doth ech foul chese his make;
And you list not in swich comfórt me bringe,
That to her grace my lady shulde me take.

Wherfor unto you, Cupide, I beseche,
Furth with Venús, noble lusty goddesse,
Sith ye may best my sorowe lesse and eche;
And I, your man, oppressed with distresse,
Can not crye 'help!' but to your gentilnesse:
So voucheth sauf, sith I, your man, wol dye,
My ladies herte in pitè folde and presse,
That of my peyne I finde remedye.

To your conning, my hertes right princesse,
My mortal fo, whiche I best love and serve,
I recommaunde my boistous lewednesse.
And, for I can not altherbest deserve
Your grace, I preye, as he that wol nat swerve,
That I may fare the better for my trouthe;
Sith I am youres, til deth my herte kerve,
On me, your man, now mercy have and routhe.

XXVI. COMPLAINT TO MY LODE-STERRE.

OF gretter cause may no wight him compleyne
Than I; for love hath set me in swich caas
That lasse Ioye and more encrees of peyne
Ne hath no man; wherfore I crye 'allas!'
A thousand tyme, whan I have tyme and space.
For she, that is my verray sorowes grounde,
Wol with her grace no wyse my sorowes sounde.

And that, shulde be my sorowes hertes leche,
Is me ageins, and maketh me swich werre,
That shortly, [in] al maner thought and speche,
Whether it be that I be nigh or ferre,
I misse the grace of you, my lodesterre,
Which causeth me on you thus for to crye;
And al is it for lakke of remedye.

My soverain Ioye thus is my mortal fo;
She that shulde causen al my lustinesse,
List in no wyse of my sorowes saye 'ho!'
But let me thus darraine, in hevinesse,
With woful thoughtes and my grete distresse,

The which she might right wele, [at] every tyde,
If that her liste, out of my herte gyde.

But it is so, that her list, in no wyse,
Have pitè on my woful besinesse;
And I ne can do no maner servyse
That may me torne out of my hevinesse;
So woldè god, that she now wolde impresse
Right in her herte my trouthe and eek good wille;
And let me not, for lakke of mercy, spille.

Now wele I woot why thus I smerte sore;
For couthe I wele, as othere folkes, feyne,
Than neded me to live in peyne no more,
But, whan I were from you, unteye my reyne,
And, for the tyme, drawe in another cheyne.
But woldè god that alle swich were y-knowe,
And duely punisshed of hye and lowe.

Swich lyf defye I, bothe in thoughte and worde,
For yet me were wel lever for to sterve
Than in my herte for to make an horde
Of any falshood; for, til deth to-kerve
My herte and body, shal I never swerve
From you, that best may be my final cure,
But, at your liste, abyde myn aventure;

And preye to you, noble seint Valentyne,
My ladies herte that ye wolde enbrace,
And make her pitè to me more enclyne
That I may stonden in her noble grace
In hasty time, whyl I have lyves space:
For yit wiste I never noon, of my lyve,
So litel hony in so fayre hyve.

BOETHIUS DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIE.

BOOK I.

METRE I.

Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi.

ALLAS! I, weping, am constreined to biginnen vers of sorowful matere, that whylom in florisching studie made delitable ditees. For lo! rendinge Muses of poetes endyten to me thinges to be writen; and drery vers of wrecchednesse weten my face with verray teres. At the leeste, no dredè ne mighte overcomen tho Muses, that they ne weren felawes, and folweden my wey, *that is to seyn, whan I was exyled;* they that weren glorie of my youthe, whylom weleful and grene, comforten now the sorowful werdes of me, olde man. For elde is comen unwarly upon me, hasted by the harmes that I have, and sorow hath comaunded his age to be in me. Heres hore ben shad overtymeliche upon myn heved, and the slake skin trembleth upon myn empted body. Thilke deeth of men is weleful that ne cometh not in yeres that ben swete, but cometh to wrecches, often y-cleped.

Allas! allas! with how deef an ere deeth, cruel, torneth awey fro wrecches, and naiteth to closen wepinge eyen! Whyl Fortune, unfeithful, favorede me with lighte goodes, the sorowful houre, *that is to seyn, the deeth,* hadde almost dreynt myn heved. But now, for Fortune cloudy hath chaunged hir deceyvable chere to me-ward, myn unpitous lyf draweth a-long unagreable dwellinges *in me.* O ye, my frendes, what or wherto avauntede ye me to ben weleful? for he that hath fallen stood nat in stedefast degree.

PROSE I.

Hec dum mecum tacitus ipse reputarem.

Whyle that I stille recordede thise thinges with my-self, and markede my weeply compleynte with office of pointel, I saw, stondinge aboven the heighte of myn heved, a woman of ful greet reverence by semblaunt, hir eyen brenninge and cleer-seinge over the comune might of men; with a lyfly colour, and with swich vigour and strengthe that it ne mighte nat ben empted; al were it so that she was ful of so greet age, that men ne wolde nat trowen, in no manere, that she were of oure elde. The stature of hir was of a doutous Iugement; for som-tyme she constreinede and shronk hir-selven lyk to the comune mesure of men, and sum-tyme it semede that she touchede the hevene with the heighte of hir heved; and whan she heef hir heved hyer, she percede the selve hevene, so that the sighte of men looking was in ydel. Hir clothes weren maked of right delye thredes and subtil crafte, of perdurable matere; the whiche clothes she hadde woven with hir owene hondes, as I knew wel after

by hir-self, declaringe and shewinge to me the beautee; the whiche clothes a derknesse of a forleten and dispysed elde hadde dusked and derked, as it is wont to derken bi-smokede images.

In the nethereste hem or bordure of thise clothes men redden, y-woven in, a Grekissh P, *that signifyeth the lyf Actif;* and aboven that lettre, in the heyeste bordure, a Grekissh T, *that signifyeth the lyf Contemplatif.* And bi-twixen these two lettres ther weren seyn degrees, nobly y-wroght in manere of laddres; by whiche degrees men mighten climben fro the nethereste lettre to the uppereste. Natheles, handes of some men hadde corven that cloth by violence and by strengthe; and everiche man of hem hadde born awey swiche peces as he mighte geten. And forsothe, this forseide woman bar smale bokes in hir right hand, and in hir left hand she bar a ceptre.

And whan she say thise poetical Muses aprochen aboute my bed, and endytinge wordes to my wepinges, she was a litel amoved, and glowede with cruel eyen. 'Who,' quod she, 'hath suffred aprochen to this syke man thise comune strompetes of swich a place that men clepen the theatre? The whiche nat only ne asswagen nat hise sorwes with none remedies, but they wolden feden and norisshen hem with swete venim. Forsothe, thise ben tho that with thornes and prikkinges of talents or affecciouns, whiche that ne ben nothing fructefyinge nor profitable, destroyen the corn plentevous of fruites of resoun; for they holden the hertes of men in usage, but they ne delivere nat folk fro maladye. But if ye Muses hadden withdrawen fro me, with your flateryes, any uncunninge and unprofitable man, as men ben wont to finde comunly amonges the poeple, I wolde wene suffre the lasse grevously; for-why, in swiche an unprofitable man, myn ententes ne weren no-thing endamaged. But ye withdrawen me this man, that hath be norisshed in the studies or scoles of Eleaticis and of Achademicis *in Grece.* But goth now rather awey, ye mermaidenes, whiche that ben swete til it be at the laste, and suffreth this man to be cured and heled by myne Muses,' *that is to seyn, by noteful sciences.*

And thus this companye of Muses y-blamed casten wrothly the chere dounward to the erthe; and, shewinge by reednesse hir shame, they passeden sorowfully the threshfold.

And I, of whom the sighte, plounged in teres, was derked so that I ne mighte not knowen what that womman was, of so imperial auctoritee, I wex al abaisshed and astoned, and caste my sighte doun to the erthe, and bigan stille for to abyde what she wolde don afterward. Tho com she ner, and sette hir doun up-on the uttereste corner of my bed; and she, biholdinge my chere, that was cast to the erthe, hevy and grevous of wepinge, compleinede, with thise wordes that I shal seyen, the perturbacioun of my thought.

METRE II.

Heu quam precipiti mersa profundo.

'Allas! how the thought of man, dreint in over-throwinge deepnesse, dulleth, and forleteth his propre cleernesse, mintinge to goon in-to foreine derknesses, as ofte as his anoyous busynesse wexeth with-oute mesure, that is driven to and fro with worldly windes! This man, that whylom was free, to whom the hevene was open and knowen, and was wont to goon in heveneliche pathes, and saugh the lightnesse of the rede sonne, and saugh the sterres of the colde mone, and whiche sterre in hevene useth wandering recourses, y-flit by dyverse speres — this man, overcomer, hadde comprehended al this by noumbre *of acountinge in astronomye.* And over this, he was wont to seken the causes whennes

the souning windes moeven and bisien the smothe water of the see; and what spirit torneth the stable hevene; and why the sterre aryseth out of the rede eest, to fallen in the westrene wawes; and what atempreth the lusty houres of the firste somer sesoun, that highteth and apparaileth the erthe with rosene flowres; and who maketh that plentevouse autompne, in fulle yeres, fleteth with hevy grapes. And eek this man was wont to telle the dyverse causes of nature that weren y-hidde. Allas! now lyeth he empted of light of his thought; and his nekke is pressed with hevy cheynes; and bereth his chere enclyned adoun for the grete weighte, and is constreined to looken on the fool erthe!

Prose II.

Set medicine, iniquit, tempus est.

But tyme is now,' quod she, 'of medicine more than of compleinte.' Forsothe than she, entendinge to me-ward with alle the lookinge of hir eyen, seide: —'Art nat thou he,' quod she, 'that whylom y-norisshed with my milk, and fostered with myne metes, were escaped and comen to corage of a parfit man? Certes, I yaf thee swiche armures that, yif thou thy-self ne haddest first cast hem a-wey, they shulden han defended thee in sikernesse that may nat ben overcomen. Knowest thou me nat? Why art thou stille? Is it for shame or for astoninge? It were me lever that it were for shame; but it semeth me that astoninge hath oppressed thee.' And whan she say me nat only stille, but with-outen office of tunge and al doumb, she leide hir hand softely upon my brest, and seide: 'Here nis no peril,' quod she; 'he is fallen into a litargie, whiche that is a comune sykenes to hertes that ben deceived. He hath a litel foryeten him-self, but certes he shal lightly remembren him-self, yif so be that he hath knowen me or now; and that he may so don, I wil wypen a litel his eyen, that ben derked by the cloude of mortal thinges.' Thise wordes seide she, and with the lappe of hir garment, y-plyted in a frounce, she dryede myn eyen, that weren fulle of the wawes of my wepinges.

Metre III.

T'unc me discussa liquerunt nocte tenebre.

Thus, whan that night was discussed and chased a-wey, derknesses forleften me, and to myn eyen repeirede ayein hir firste strengthe. And, right by ensaumple as the sonne is hid whan the sterres ben clustred (*that is to seyn, whan sterres ben covered with cloudes*) by a swifte winde that highte Chorus, and that the firmament stant derked by wete ploungy cloudes, and that the sterres nat apperen up-on hevene, so that the night semeth sprad up-on erthe: yif thanne the wind that highte Borias, y-sent out of the caves of the contree of Trace, beteth this night (*that is to seyn, chaseth it a-wey*), and descovereth the closed day: than shyneth Phebus y-shaken with sodein light, and smyteth with his bemes in mervelinge eyen.

Prose III.

Haud aliter tristicie nebulis dissolutis.

Right so, and non other wyse, the cloudes of sorwe dissolved and don a-wey, I took hevene, and receivede minde to knowen the face of my fysicien; so that I sette myn eyen on hir, and fastnede my lookinge. I beholde my norice Philosophie, in whos houses I hadde conversed and haunted fro my youthe; and I seide thus. 'O thou maistresse of alle vertues, descended from the soverein sete, why artow comen in-to this solitarie place of myn exil? Artow comen for thou art maked coupable with me of false blames?'

'O,' quod she, 'my norry, sholde I forsaken thee now, and sholde I nat parten with thee, by comune travaile, the charge that thou hast suffred for envie of my name? Certes, it nere not leveful ne sittinge thing to Philosophie, to leten with-outen companye the wey of him that is innocent. Sholde I thanne reduote my blame, and agrysen as though ther were bifallen a newe thing? *quasi diceret, non.* For trowestow that Philosophie be now alderfirst assailed in perils by folk of wikkede maneres? Have I nat striven with ful greet stryf, in olde tyme, bifore the age of my Plato, ayeines the foolhardinesse of folye? And eek, the same Plato livinge, his maister Socrates deservede victorie of unrightful deeth in my presence. The heritage of which Socrates — *the heritage is to seyn the doctrine of the whiche Socrates in his opinioun of Felicitee, that I clepe welefulnesse* — whan that the poeple of Epicuriens and Stoiciens and many othre enforceden hem to go ravisshe everich man for his part — *that is to seyn, that everich of hem wolde drawen to the defence of his opinioun the wordes of Socrates* — they, as in partie of hir preye, to-drowen me, cryinge and debatinge ther-ayeins, and corven and to-renten my clothes that I hadde woven with myn handes; and with tho cloutes that they hadden araced out of my clothes they wenten awey, weninge that I hadde gon with hem everydel.

In whiche *Epicuriens and Stoiciens*, for as moche as ther semede some traces or steppes of myn habite, the folye of men, weninge tho *Epicuriens and Stoiciens* my famuleres, perverted (*sc. persequendo*) some through the errour of the wikkede or uncunninge multitude of hem. *This is to seyn that, for they semede philosophres, they weren pursued to the deeth and slayn.* So yif thou hast nat knowen the exilinge of Anaxogore, ne the enpoysoninge of Socrates, ne the tourments of Zeno, for they weren straungeres: yit mightestow han knowen the Senecciens and the Canios and the Sorans, of whiche folk the renoun is neither over-olde ne unsolempne. The whiche men, no-thing elles ne broughte hem to the deeth but only for they weren enfourmed of myne maneres, and semeden most unlyke to the studies of wikkede folk. And forthy thou oughtest nat to wondren though that I, in the bittre see of this lyf, be fordriven with tempestes blowinge aboute, in the whiche tempestes this is my most purpos, *that is to seyn*, to displesen to wikkede men. Of whiche shrewes, al be the ost never so greet, it is to dispyse; for it nis governed with no leder of resoun, but it is ravisshed only by fletinge errour folyly and lightly. And if they som-tyme, makinge an ost ayeins us, assaile us as strenger, our leder draweth to-gidere hise richesses in-to his tour, and they ben ententif aboute sarpulers or sachels unprofitable for to taken. But we that ben heye aboven, siker fro alle tumulte and wode noise, warnestored and enclosed in swich a palis, whider as that chateringe or anoyinge folye ne may nat attayne, we scorne swiche ravineres and henteres of fouleste thinges.

METRE IV.

Quisquis composito serenus euo.

Who-so it be that is cleer of vertu, sad, and wel ordinat of livinge, that hath put under foot the proude werdes and looketh upright up-on either fortune, he may holde his chere undiscomfited. The rage ne the manaces of the see, commoevinge or chasinge upward hete fro the botme, ne shal not moeve that man; ne the unstable mountaigne that highte Vesevus, that wrytheth out through his brokene chimineys smokinge fyres. Ne the wey of thonder leit, that is wont to smyten heye toures, ne shal nat moeve that man.

Wher-to thanne, o wrecches, drede ye tiraunte that ben wode and felonous with-oute any strengthe? Hope after no-thing, ne drede nat; and so shaltow desarmen the ire of thilke unmighty tiraunt. But who-so that, quakinge, dredeth or desireth thing that nis nat stable of his right, that man that so doth hath cast awey his sheld and is remoeved fro his place, and enlaceth him in the cheyne with the which he may ben drawen.

Prose IV.

Sentisne, inquit, hec.

'Felestow,' quod she, 'thise thinges, and entren they aught in thy corage? Artow lyke an asse to the harpe? Why wepestow, why spillestow teres? Yif thou abydest after help of thy leche, thee bihoveth discovere thy wounde.'

Tho I, that hadde gadered strengthe in my corage, answerede and seide: 'And nedeth it yit,' quod I, 'of rehersinge or of amonicioun; and sheweth it nat y-nough by him-self the sharpnesse of Fortune, that wexeth wood ayeins me? Ne moeveth it nat thee to seen the face or the manere of this place (*i. prisoun*)? Is this the librarie whiche that thou haddest chosen for a right certein sete to thee in myn hous, ther-as thou desputedest ofte with me of the sciences of thinges touchinge divinitee and touchinge mankinde? Was thanne myn habite swich as it is now? Was than my face or my chere swiche as now (*quasi diceret, non*), whan I soughte with thee secrets of nature, whan thou enformedest my maneres and the resoun of alle my lyf to the ensaumple of the ordre of hevene? Is nat this the guerdoun that I referre to thee, to whom I have be obeisaunt? Certes, thou confermedest, by the mouth of Plato, this sentence, *that is to seyn*, that comune thinges or comunalitees weren blisful, yif they that hadden studied al fully to wisdom governeden thilke thinges, or elles yif it so bifille that the governoures of comunalitees studieden to geten wisdom.

Thou seidest eek, by the mouth of the same Plato, that it was a necessarie cause, wyse men to taken and desire the governaunce of comune thinges, for that the governements of citees, y-left in the handes of felonous tormentours citizenes, ne sholde nat bringe in pestilence and destruccioun to gode folk. And therfor I, folwinge thilke auctoritee (*sc. Platonis*), desired to putten forth in execucioun and in acte of comune administracioun thilke thinges that I hadde lerned of thee among my secree resting-whyles. Thou, and god that putte thee in the thoughtes of wyse folk, ben knowinge with me, that no-thing ne broughte me to maistrie or dignitee, but the comune studie of alle goodnesse. And ther-of comth it that bi-twixen wikked folk and me han ben grevous discordes, that ne mighten ben relesed by preyeres; for this libertee hath the freedom of conscience, that the wratthe of more mighty folk hath alwey ben despysed of me for savacioun of right.

How ofte have I resisted and withstonde thilke man that highte Conigaste, that made alwey assautes ayeins the prospre fortunes of pore feble folk? How ofte eek have I put of or cast out him, Trigwille, provost of the kinges hous, bothe of the wronges that he hadde bigunne to don, and eek fully performed? How ofte have I covered and defended by the auctoritee of me, put ayeins perils — *that is to seyn, put myn auctoritee in peril for* — the wrecched pore folk, that the covetyse of straungeres unpunished tourmenteden alwey with miseyses and grevaunces out of noumbre? Never man ne drow me yit fro right to wronge. Whan I say the fortunes and the richesses of the poeple of the provinces ben harmed or amenused, outher by privee ravynes or by comune tributes or cariages, as sory was I as they that suffreden the harm.

Glossa. *Whan that Theodoric, the king of Gothes, in a dere yere, hadde hise gerneres ful of corn, and comaundede that no man ne sholde byen no corn til his corn were sold, and that at a grevous dere prys, Boece withstood that ordinaunce, and overcom it, knowinge al this the king himself.*

Textus. Whan it was in the soure hungry tyme, ther was establisshed or cryed grevous and inplitable coempcioun, that men sayen wel it sholde greetly turmenten and endamagen al the province of Campaigne, I took stryf ayeins the provost of the pretorie for comune profit. And, the king knowinge of it, I overcom it, so that the coempcioun ne was not axed ne took effect.

[**Glossa.**] *Coempcioun, that is to seyn, comune achat or buying to-gidere, that were establisshed up-on the poeple by swiche a manere imposicioun, as who-so boughte a busshel corn, he moste yeve the king the fifte part.*

[**Textus.**] Paulin, a counseiller of Rome, the richesses of the whiche Paulin the houndes of the palays, *that is to seyn, the officeres*, wolden han devoured by hope and covetise, yit drow I him out of the Iowes (*sc. faucibus*) of hem that gapeden. And for as moche as the peyne of the accusacioun aiuged biforn ne sholde nat sodeinly henten ne punisshen wrongfully Albin, a counseiller of Rome, I putte me ayeins the hates and indignaciouns of the accusor Ciprian. Is it nat thanne y-nough y-seyn, that I have purchased grete discordes ayeins my-self? But I oughte be the more assured ayeins alle othre folk (*s. Romayns*), that for the love of rightwisnesse I ne reserved never no-thing to my-self to hemward of the kinges halle, *sc. officers*, by the whiche I were the more siker. But thorugh tho same accusors accusinge, I am condempned. Of the noumbir of the whiche accusors oon Basilius, that whylom was chased out of the kinges service, is now compelled in accusinge of my name, for nede of foreine moneye. Also Opilion and Gaudencius han accused me, al be it so that the Iustice regal hadde whylom demed hem bothe to go in-to exil for hir trecheryes and fraudes withoute noumbir. To whiche Iugement they nolden nat obeye, but defendeden hem by the sikernesse of holy houses, *that is to seyn, fledden into seintuaries;* and whan this was aperceived to the king, he comaundede, that but they voidede the citee of Ravenne by certein day assigned, that men sholde merken hem on the forheved with an hoot yren and chasen hem out of the toune. Now what thing, semeth thee, mighte ben lykned to this crueltee? For certes, thilke same day was received the accusinge of my name by thilke same accusors. What may ben seid her-to? (*quasi diceret, nichil*). Hath my studie and my cunninge deserved thus; or elles the foreseide dampnacioun of *me*, made that hem rightful accusors or no? (*quasi diceret, non*). Was not Fortune ashamed of this? Certes, al hadde nat Fortune ben ashamed that innocence was accused, yit oughte she han had shame of the filthe of myne accusours.

But, axestow in somme, of what gilt I am accused, men seyn that I wolde save the companye of the senatours. And desirest thou to heren in what manere? I am accused that I sholde han destourbed the accusor to beren lettres, by whiche he sholde han maked the senatoures gilty ayeins the kinges real maiestee. O maistresse, what demestow of this? Shal I forsake this blame, that I ne be no shame to thee? (*quasi diceret, non*). Certes, I have wold it, *that is to seyn, the savacioun of the senat*, ne I shal never leten to wilne it, and that I confesse and am aknowe; but the entente of the accusor to be destourbed shal cese. For shal I clepe it thanne a felonie or a sinne that I have desired the savacioun of the ordre of the senat? (*quasi diceret, dubito quid*).

And certes yit hadde thilke same senat don by me, thorugh hir decrets and hir Iugements, as though it were a sinne or a felonie; *that is to seyn, to wilne the savacioun of hem* (*sc. senatus*). But folye, that lyeth alwey to him-self, may not chaunge the merite of thinges. Ne I trowe nat, by the Iugement of Socrates, that it were leveful to me to hyde the sothe, ne assente to lesinges. But certes, how so ever it be of this, I putte it to gessen or preisen to the Iugement of thee and of wyse folk. Of whiche thing al the ordinaunce and the sothe, for as moche as folk that ben to comen after our dayes shullen knowen it, I have put it in scripture and in remembraunce. For touching the lettres falsly maked, by whiche lettres I am accused to han hoped the fredom of Rome, what aperteneth me to speke ther-of? Of whiche lettres the fraude hadde ben shewed apertly, yif I hadde had libertee for to han used and ben at the confessioun of myne accusours, the whiche thing in alle nedes hath greet strengthe. For what other fredom may men hopen? Certes, I wolde that som other fredom mighte ben hoped. I wolde thanne han answered by the wordes of a man that highte Canius; for whan he was accused by Gaius Cesar, Germeynes sone, that he (*Canius*) was knowinge and consentinge of a coniuracioun y-maked ayeins him (*sc. Gaius*), this Canius answerede thus: "Yif I hadde wist it, thou haddest nat wist it." In which thing sorwe hath nat so dulled my wit, that I pleyne only that shrewede folk aparailen felonies ayeins virtu; but I wondre greetly how that they may performe thinges that they hadde hoped for to don. For-why, to wilne shrewednesse, that comth peraventure of oure defaute; but it is lyk a monstre and a mervaille, how that, in the present sighte of god, may ben acheved and performed swiche thinges as every felonous man hath conceived in his thought ayeins innocents. For which thing oon of thy famileres nat unskilfully axed thus: "Yif god is, whennes comen wikkede thinges? And yif god ne is, whennes comen gode thinges?" But al hadde it ben leveful that felonous folk, that now desiren the blood and the deeth of alle gode men and eek of alle the senat, han wilned to gon destroyen me, whom they han seyen alwey batailen and defenden gode men and eek al the senat, yit had I nat desserved of the faderes, *that is to seyn, of the senatoures*, that they sholden wilne my destruccioun.

Thou remembrest wel, as I gesse, that whan I wolde doon or seyen any thing, thou thyself, alwey present, rewledest me. At the city of Verone, whan that the king, gredy of comune slaughter, caste him to transporten up al the ordre of the senat the gilt of his real maiestee, of the whiche gilt that Albin was accused, with how gret sikernesse of peril to me defendede I al the senat! Thou wost wel that I seye sooth, ne I ne avauntede me never in preysinge of my-self. For alwey, whan any wight receiveth precious renoun in avauntinge him-self of his werkes, he amenuseth the secree of his conscience. But now thou mayst wel seen to what ende I am comen for myne innocence; I receive peyne of fals felonye for guerdon of verray vertu. And what open confessioun of felonye hadde ever Iuges so acordaunt in crueltee, *that is to seyn, as myn accusinge hath*, that either errour of mannes wit or elles condicioun of Fortune, that is uncertein to alle mortal folk, ne submittede some of hem, *that is to seyn, that it ne enclynede som Iuge to han pitee or compassioun?* For al-thogh I hadde ben accused that I wolde brenne holy houses, and strangle preestes with wikkede swerde, or that I hadde greythed deeth to al gode men, algates the sentence sholde han punisshed me, present, confessed, or convict. But now I am remewed fro the citee *of Rome* almost fyve hundred thousand

pas, I am with-oute defence dampned to proscripcioun and to the deeth, for the studie and bountees that I have doon to the senat. But O, wel ben they worthy of merite (*as who seith, nay*), ther mighte never yit non of hem be convict of swiche a blame as myne is! Of whiche trespas, myne accusours sayen ful wel the dignitee; the whiche dignitee, for they wolden derken it with medeling of som felonye, they baren me on hand, and lyeden, that I hadde polut and defouled my conscience with sacrilege, for coveitise of dignitee. And certes, thou thyself, that are plaunted in me, chacedest out of the sege of my corage al coveitise of mortal thinges; ne sacrilege hadde no leve to han a place in me biforn thyne eyen. For thou droppedest every day in myne eres and in my thought thilke comaundement of Pictagoras, *that is to seyn*, men shal serve to godde, *and not to goddes*. Ne it was nat convenient, *ne no nede*, to taken help of the foulest spirites; I, that thou hast ordeined and set in swiche excellence that thou makedest me lyk to god. And over this, the right clene secree chaumbre of myne hous, *that is to seyn, my wif*, and the companye of myn honest freendes, and my wyves fader, as wel holy as worthy to ben reverenced thorugh his owne dedes, defenden me from alle suspecioun of swich blame. But O malice! For they that accusen me taken of thee, *Philosophie*, feith of so gret blame! For they trowen that I have had affinitee to malefice *or enchauntement*, by-cause that I am replenisshed and fulfilled with thy techinges, and enformed of thy maneres. And thus it suffiseth not only, that thy reverence ne availe me not, but-yif that thou, of thy free wille, rather be blemished with myn offencioun. But certes, to the harmes that I have, ther bityideth yit this encrees of harm, that the gessinge and the Iugement of moche folk ne looken no-thing to the desertes of thinges, but only to the aventure of fortune; and iugen that only swiche thinges ben purveyed of god, whiche that temporel welefulnesse commendeth.

Glose. *As thus: that, yif a wight have prosperitee, he is a good man and worthy to han that prosperitee; and who-so hath adversitee, he is a wikked man, and god hath forsake him, and he is worthy to han that adversitee. This is the opinioun of some folk.*

And ther-of comth that good gessinge, first of alle thing, forsaketh wrecches: certes, it greveth me to thinke right now the dyverse sentences that the poeple seith of me. And thus moche I seye, that the laste charge of contrarious fortune is this: that, whan that any blame is leyd upon a caitif, men wenen that he hath deserved that he suffreth. And I, that am put awey fro gode men, and despoiled of dignitees, and defouled of my name by gessinge, have suffred torment for my gode dedes. Certes, me semeth that I see the felonous covines of wikked men habounden in Ioye and in gladnesse. And I see that every lorel shapeth him to finde out newe fraudes for to accuse gode folk. And I see that gode men beth overthrowen for drede of my peril; and every luxurious tourmentour dar doon alle felonye unpunisshed and ben excited therto by yiftes; and innocents ne ben not only despoiled of sikernesse but of defence; and therfore me list to cryen *to god* in this wyse: —

METRE V.

O stelliferi conditor orbis.

O thou maker of the whele that bereth the sterres, which that art y-fastned to thy perdurable chayer, and tornest the hevene with a ravisshing sweigh, and constreinest the sterres to suffren thy lawe; so that the mone som-tyme shyning with hir ful hornes, meting with alle the bemes of the sonne hir brother, hydeth the

sterres that ben lesse; and somtyme, whan the mone, pale with hir derke hornes, approcheth the sonne, leseth hir lightes; and that the eve-sterre Hesperus, whiche that in the firste tyme of the night bringeth forth hir colde arysinges, cometh eft ayein hir used cours, and is pale *by the morwe* at the rysing of the sonne, and is thanne cleped Lucifer. Thou restreinest the day by shorter dwelling, in the tyme of colde winter that maketh the leves to falle. Thou dividest the swifte tydes of the night, whan the hote somer is comen. Thy might atempreth the variaunts sesons of the yere; so that Zephirus the deboneir wind bringeth ayein, *in the first somer sesoun*, the leves that the wind that highte Boreas hath reft awey *in autumpne, that is to seyn, in the laste ende of somer;* and the sedes that the sterre that highte Arcturus saw, ben waxen heye cornes whan the sterre Sirius eschaufeth hem. Ther nis no-thing unbounde from his olde lawe, ne forleteth the werke of his propre estat..

O thou governour, governinge alle thinges by certein ende, why refusestow only to governe the werkes of men by dewe manere? Why suffrest thou that slydinge fortune torneth so grete entrechaunginges of thinges, so that anoyous peyne, that sholde dewely punisshe felouns, punissheth innocents? And folk of wikkede maneres sitten in heye chayres, and anoyinge folk treden, and that unrightfully, on the nekkes of holy men? And vertu clershyninge naturelly is hid in derke derkenesses, and the rightful man bereth the blame and the peyne of the felouns. Ne forsweringe ne the fraude, covered and kembd with a fals colour, ne anoyeth nat to shrewes; the whiche shrewes, whan hem list to usen hir strengthe, they reioysen hem to putten under hem the sovereyne kinges, whiche that poeple with-outen noumbre dreden.

O thou, what so ever thou be that knittest alle bondes of thinges, loke on thise wrecchede erthes; we men that ben nat a foule party, but a fayr party of so grete a werk, we ben tormented in this see of fortune. Thou governour, withdraw and restreyne the ravisshinge flodes, and fastne and ferme thise erthes stable with thilke bonde, with whiche thou governest the hevene that is so large.'

Prose V.

Hic ubi continuato dolore delatraui.

Whan I hadde, with a continuel sorwe, sobbed or borken out thise thinges, she with hir chere pesible, and no-thing amoeved with my compleintes, seide thus: 'Whan I say thee,' quod she, 'sorweful and wepinge, I wiste anon that thou were a wrecche and exiled; but I wiste never how fer thyne exile was, yif thy tale ne hadde shewed it to me. But certes, al be thou fer fro thy contree, thou nart nat put out of it; but thou hast failed of thy weye and gon amis. And yif thou hast lever for to wene that thou be put out of thy contree, than hast thou put out thy-self rather than any other wight hath. For no wight but thy-self ne mighte never han don that to thee. For yif thou remembre of what contree thou art born, it nis nat governed by emperours, ne by governement of multitude, as weren the contrees of hem of Athenes; but oo lord and oo king, *and that is god, that is lord of thy contree*, whiche that reioyseth him of the dwelling of hise citezenes, and nat for to putte hem in exil; of the whiche lorde it is a soverayne fredom to be governed by the brydel of him and obeye to his Iustice. Hastow foryeten thilke right olde lawe of thy citee, in the whiche citee it is ordeined and establisshed, that for what wight that hath lever founden ther-in his sete or his hous than elles-wher, he may nat be exiled by no right from that place? For who-so that is contened in-with the palis and the clos

of thilke citee, ther nis no drede that he may deserve to ben exiled. But who-so that leteth the wil for to enhabite there, he forleteth also to deserve to ben citezein of thilke citee. So that I sey, that the face of this place ne moveth me nat so mochel as thyne owne face. Ne I axe nat rather the walles of thy librarie, aparayled and wrought with yvory and with glas, than after the sete of thy thought. In whiche I putte nat whylom bokes, but I putte that that maketh bokes worthy of prys or precious, that is to seyn, the sentence of my bokes. And certeinly of thy desertes, bistowed in comune good, thou hast seid sooth, but after the multitude of thy gode dedes, thou hast seid fewe; and of the honestee or of the falsnesse of thinges that ben aposed ayeins thee, thou hast remembred thinges that ben knowen to alle folk. And of the felonyes and fraudes of thyne accusours, it semeth thee have y-touched it forsothe rightfully and shortly, al mighten tho same thinges betere and more plentivousely ben couth in the mouthe of the poeple that knoweth al this.

Thou hast eek blamed gretly and compleined of the wrongful dede of the senat. And thou hast sorwed for my blame, and thou hast wopen for the damage of thy renoun that is apayred; and thy laste sorwe eschaufede ayeins fortune, and compleinest that guerdouns ne ben nat evenliche yolden to the desertes of folk. And in the latere ende of thy wode Muse, thou preyedest that thilke pees that governeth the hevene sholde governe the erthe. But for that manye tribulaciouns of affecciouns han assailed thee, and sorwe and ire and wepinge to-drawen thee dyversely; as thou art now feble of thought, mightier remedies ne shullen nat yit touchen thee, for whiche we wol usen somdel lighter medicines: so that thilke passiouns that ben woxen harde in swellinge, by perturbaciouns flowing in-to thy thought, mowen wexen esy and softe, to receiven the strengthe of a more mighty and more egre medicine, by an esier touchinge.

Metre VI.

Cum Phebi radiis graue
Cancri sidus inestuat.

Whan that the hevy sterre of the Cancre eschaufeth by the bemes of Phebus, *that is to seyn, whan that Phebus the sonne is in the signe of the Cancre*, who-so yeveth thanne largely hise sedes to the feldes that refusen to receiven hem, lat him gon, bigyled of trust that he hadde to his corn, to acorns of okes. Yif thou wolt gadre violettes, ne go thou not to the purpur wode whan the feld, chirkinge, agryseth of colde by the felnesse of the winde that highte Aquilon. Yif thou desirest or wolt usen grapes, ne seke thou nat, with a glotonous hond, to streyne and presse the stalkes of the vine in the ferst somer sesoun; for Bachus, the god of wyne, hath rather yeven hise yiftes to autumpne, *the later ende of somer*.

God tokneth and assigneth the tymes, ablinge hem to hir propres offices; ne he ne suffreth nat the stoundes whiche that him-self hath devyded and constreyned to ben y-medled to-gidere. And forthy he that forleteth certein ordinaunce of doinge by overthrowinge wey, he ne hath no glade issue or ende of his werkes.

Prose VI.

Primum igitur paterisne me paucu-
lis rogacionibus.

'First woltow suffre me to touche and assaye the estat of thy thought by a fewe demaundes, so that I may understonde what be the manere of thy curacioun?'

'Axe me,' quod I, 'at thy wille, what thou wolt, and I shal answere.'

Tho seide she thus: 'Whether wenestow,' quod she, 'that this world be governed by foolish happes and fortunous, or elles that ther be in it any governement of resoun?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'I ne trowe nat in no manere, that so certein thinges sholde be moeved by fortunous fortune; but I wot wel that god, maker and mayster, is governour of his werk. Ne never nas yit day that mighte putte me out of the sothnesse of that sentence.'

'So is it,' quod she; 'for the same thing songe thou a litel her-biforn, and biweyledest and biweptest, that only men weren put out of the cure of god. For of alle other thinges thou ne doutedest nat that they nere governed by resoun. But owh! (*i. pape!*) I wondre gretly, certes why that thou art syk, sin that thou art put in so holsom a sentence. But lat us seken depper; I coniecte that ther lakketh I not nere what. But sey me this: sin that thou ne doutest nat that this world be governed by god, with whiche governailes takestow hede that it is governed?'

'Unnethe,' quod I, 'knowe I the sentence of thy questioun; so that I ne may nat yit answeren to thy demaundes.'

'I nas nat deceived,' quod she, 'that ther ne faileth somwhat, by whiche the maladye of thy perturbacioun is crept into thy thought, so as the strengthe of the palis chyning is open. But sey me this: remembrest thou what is the ende of thinges, and whider that the entencioun of alle kinde tendeth?'

'I have herd it told som-tyme,' quod I; 'but drerinesse hath dulled my memorie.'

'Certes,' quod she, 'thou wost wel whennes that alle thinges ben comen and procedeth?'

'I wot wel,' quod I, and answerede, that 'god is beginning of al.'

'And how may this be,' quod she, 'that, sin thou knowest the beginning of thinges, that thou ne knowest nat what is the ende of thinges? But swiche ben the customes of perturbaciouns, and this power they han, that they may moeve a man out of his place, *that is to seyn, fro the stable-nes and perfeccioun of his knowinge;* but, certes, they may nat al arace him, ne aliene him in al. But I wolde that thou woldest answere to this: remembrestow that thou art a man?'

'Why sholde I nat remembre that?' quod I.

'Maystow nat telle me thanne,' quod she, 'what thing is a man?'

'Axestow me nat,' quod I, 'whether that I be a resonable mortal beest? I woot wel, and I confesse wel that I am it.'

'Wistestow never yit that thou were any other thing?' quod she.

'No,' quod I.

'Now woot I,' quod she, 'other cause of thy maladye, and that right grete. Thou hast left for to knowen thy-self, what thou art; thorugh whiche I have pleynly founden the cause of thy maladye, or elles the entree of recoveringe of thyn hele. For-why, for thou art confounded with foryeting of thy-self, for-thy sorwestow that thou art exiled of thy propre goodes. And for thou ne wost what is the ende of thinges, forthy demestow that felonous and wikked men ben mighty and weleful. And for thou hast foryeten by whiche governements the world is governed, for-thy wenestow that thise mutaciouns of fortune fleten with-oute governour. Thise ben grete causes not only to maladye, but, certes, grete causes to deeth. But I thanke the auctor and the maker of hele, that nature hath not al forleten thee. I have grete norisshinges of thyn hele, and that is, the sothe sentence of governaunce of the worlde; that thou bilevest that the governinge of it nis nat subiect ne underput to the folie of thise happes aventurous, but to the resoun of god. And ther-for doute thee no-thing; for of this litel spark thyn hete of lyf shal shyne.

But for as moche as it is nat tyme yit of faster remedies, and the nature of thoughtes deceived is this, that as ofte as they casten awey sothe opiniouns, they clothen hem in false

opiniouns, of which false opiniouns the derkenesse of perturbacioun wexeth up, that confoundeth the verray insighte: and that derkenesse shal I assaye som-what to maken thinne and wayk by lighte and meneliche remedies; so that, after that the derkenesse of deceivinge desiringes is don awey, thou mowe knowe the shyninge of verray light.

METRE VII.

Nubibus atris.

The sterres, covered with blake cloudes, ne mowen yeten a-doun no light. Yif the trouble wind that hight Auster, turning and walwinge the see, medleth the hete, *that is to seyn, the boyling up from the botme; the wawes, that whylom weren clere as glas and lyke to the faire clere dayes, withstande anon the sightes of men by the filthe and ordure that is resolved. And the fletinge streem, that royleth doun dyversly fro heye mountaignes, is arested and resisted ofte tyme by the encountringe of a stoon that is departed and fallen from som roche.*

And for-thy, yif thou wolt loken and demen sooth with cleer light, and holden the wey with a right path, weyve thou Ioye, dryf fro thee drede, fleme thou hope, ne lat no sorwe aproche; *that is to seyn, lat non of thise four passiouns over-comen thee or blende thee.* For cloudy and derke is thilke thought, and bounde with brydles, where-as thise thinges regnen.'

Explicit liber primus.

BOOK II.

PROSE I.

Postea paulisper conticuit.

After this she stinte a litel; and, after that she hadde gadered by atempre stillenesse myn attencioun, she seide thus: (*As who mighte seyn thus: After thise thinges she stinte a litel; and whan she aperceived by atempre stillenesse that I was ententif to herkene hir, she bigan to speke in this wyse*): 'Yif I,' quod she, 'have understonden and knowen outrely the causes and the habit of thy maladye, thou languissest and art defeted for desyr and talent of thy rather fortune. She, that ilke Fortune only, that is chaunged, as thou feynest, to thee-ward, hath perverted the cleernesse and the estat of thy corage. I understonde the fele-folde colours and deceites of thilke merveilous monstre Fortune, and how she useth ful flateringe familaritee with hem that she enforceth to bigyle; so longe, til that she confounde with unsufferable sorwe hem that she hath left in despeyr unpurveyed. And yif thou remembrest wel the kinde, the maneres, and the desert of thilke Fortune, thou shalt wel knowe that, as in hir, thou never ne haddest ne hast y-lost any fair thing. But, as I trowe, I shal nat gretly travailen to do thee remembren on thise thinges. For thou were wont to hurtelen and despysen hir, with manly wordes, whan she was blaundissinge and present, and pursewedest hir with sentences that were drawen out of myn entree, *that is to seyn, out of myn informacioun.* But no sodein mutacioun ne bitydeth nat with-oute a manere chaunginge of corages; and so is it befallen that thou art a litel departed fro the pees of thy thought.

But now is tyme that thou drinke and ataste some softe and delitable thinges; so that, whan they ben entred with-in thee, it mowe maken wey to strengere drinkes of medicynes. Com now forth therfore the suasioun of swetenesse rethorien, whiche that goth only the right wey, whyl she forsaketh nat myne estatuts. And with Rhetorice com forth Musice, a damisel of our hous, that singeth now

lighter moedes *or prolacioums*, now hevyer. What eyleth thee, man? What is it that hath cast thee in-to morninge and in-to wepinge? I trowe that thou hast seyn som newe thing and uncouth. Thou wenest that Fortune be chaunged ayein thee; but thou wenest wrong, yif thou that wene. Alwey tho ben hir maneres; she hath rather kept, as to thee-ward, hir propre stablenesse in the chaunginge of hir-self. Right swich was she whan she flatered thee, and deceived thee with unleveful lykinges of fals welefulnesse. Thou hast now knowen and ataynt the doutous or double visage of thilke blinde goddesse Fortune. She, that yit covereth hir and wimpleth hir to other folk, hath shewed hir every-del to thee. Yif thou aprovest hir and thenkest that she is good, use hir maneres and pleyne thee nat. And yif thou agrysest hir false trecherye, despyse and cast awey hir that pleyeth so harmfully; for she, that is now cause of so muche sorwe to thee, sholde ben cause to thee of pees and of Ioye. She hath forsaken thee, forsothe; the whiche that never man may ben siker that she ne shal forsake him.

Glose. *But natheles, some bokes han the text thus:* For sothe, she hath forsaken thee, ne ther nis no man siker that she ne hath nat forsaken.

Holdestow than thilke welefulnesse precious to. thee that shal passen? And is present Fortune dereworthe to thee, which that nis nat feithful for to dwelle; and, whan she goth awey, that she bringeth a wight in sorwe? For sin she may nat ben withholden at a mannes wille, she maketh him a wrecche whan she departeth fro him. What other thing is flittinge Fortune but a maner shewinge of wrecchednesse that is to comen? Ne it ne suffyseth nat only to loken on thinge that is present biforn the eyen of a man. But wisdom loketh and amesureth the ende of thinges; and the same chaunginge from oon in-to an-other, *that is to seyn, from adversitee in-to prosperitee*, maketh that the manaces of Fortune ne ben nat for to dreden, ne the flateringes of hir to ben desired. Thus, at the laste, it bihoveth thee to suffren with evene wille in pacience al that is don in-with the floor of Fortune, *that is to seyn, in this world*, sin thou hast ones put thy nekke under the yok of hir. For yif thou wolt wryten a lawe of wendinge and of dwellinge to Fortune, whiche that thou hast chosen frely to ben thy lady, artow nat wrongful in that, and makest Fortune wroth and aspere by thyn inpatience, and yit thou mayst nat chaunge hir?

Yif thou committest and bitakest thy sailes to the winde, thou shalt be shoven, not thider that thou woldest, but whider that the wind shoveth thee. Yif thou castest thy sedes in-to the feldes, thou sholdest han in minde that the yeres ben, amonges, other-whyle plentevous and other-whyle bareyne. Thou hast bitaken thy-self to the governaunce of Fortune, and for-thy it bihoveth thee to ben obeisaunt to the maneres of thy lady. Enforcest thou thee to aresten or withholden the swiftnesse and the sweigh of hir turninge whele? O thou fool of alle mortal fooles, if Fortune bigan to dwelle stable, she cesede thanne to ben Fortune!

Metre I.

Hec cum superba uerterit uices dextra.

Whan Fortune with a proud right hand hath torned hir chaunginge stoundes, she fareth lyk the maneres of the boilinge Eurype. **Glosa.** *Eurype is an arm of the see that ebbeth and floweth; and som-tyme the streem is on o syde, and som-tyme on the other.* **Text.** She, cruel Fortune, casteth adoun kinges that whylom weren y-drad; and she, deceivable, enhaunseth up the humble chere of him that is discomfited. Ne she neither hereth ne rekketh of

wrecchede wepinges; and she is so hard that she laugheth and scorneth the wepinges of hem, the whiche she hath maked wepe with hir free wille. Thus she pleyeth, and thus she proeveth hir strengthes; and sheweth a greet wonder to alle hir servauntes, yif that a wight is seyn welcful, and overthrowe in an houre.

Prose II.

Vellem autem pauca tecum.

Certes, I wolde pleten with thee a fewe thinges, usinge the wordes of Fortune; tak hede now thy-self, yif that she axeth right. "O thou man, wher-fore makest thou me gilty by thyne every-dayes pleyninges? What wrong have I don thee? What goodes have I bireft thee that weren thyne? Stryf or plete with me, bifore what Iuge that thou wolt, of the possessioun of richesses or of dignitees. And yif thou mayst shewen me that ever any mortal man hath received any of tho thinges to ben hise in propre, than wol I graunte frely that alle thilke thinges weren thyne whiche that thou axest. Whan that nature broughte thee forth out of thy moder wombe, I receyved thee naked and nedy of alle thinges, and I norisshede thee with my richesses, and was redy and ententif through my favour to susteyne thee; and that maketh thee now inpacient ayeins me; and I envirounde thee with alle the aboundance and shyninge of alle goodes that ben in my right. Now it lyketh me to with-drawen my hand; thou hast had grace as he that hath used of foreine goodes: thou hast no right to pleyne thee, as though thou haddest outrely for-lorn alle thy thinges. Why pleynest thou thanne? I have done thee no wrong. Richesses, honours, and swiche other thinges ben of my right. My servauntes knowen me for hir lady; they comen with me, and departen whan I wende. I dar wel affermen hardily, that yif tho thinges, of which thou pleynest that thou hast forlorn, hadde ben thyne, thou ne haddest not lorn hem. Shal I thanne only ben defended to usen my right?

Certes, it is leveful to the hevene to make clere dayes, and, after that, to coveren tho same dayes with derke nightes. The yeer hath eek leve to apparailen the visage of the erthe, now with floures and now with fruit, and to confounden hem som-tyme with reynes and with coldes. The see hath eek his right to ben som-tyme calme and blaundishing with smothe water, and som-tyme to ben horrible with wawes and with tempestes. But the covetise of men, that may nat ben stanched, shal it binde me to ben stedefast, sin that stedefastnesse is uncouth to my maneres? Swich is my strengthe, and this pley I pleye continuely. I torne the whirlinge wheel with the torning cercle; I am glad to chaungen the lowest to the heyest, and the heyest to the lowest. Worth up, if thou wolt, so it be by this lawe, that thou ne holde nat that I do thee wrenge thogh thou descende adoun, whan the resoun of my pley axeth it.

Wistest thou nat how Cresus, the king of Lydiens, of whiche king Cyrus was ful sore agast a litel biforn, that this rewliche Cresus was caught of Cyrus and lad to the fyr to ben brent, but that a rayn descendede doun fro hevene that rescowede him? And is it out of thy minde how that Paulus, consul of Rome, whan he hadde taken the king of Percians, weep pitously for the captivitee of the self kinge? What other thing biwailen the cryinges of tragedies but only the dedes of Fortune, that with an unwar stroke overtorneth realmes of grete nobley? **Glose.** *Tragedie is to seyn, a dittee of a prosperitee for a tyme, that endeth in wrecchednesse.*

Lernedest nat thou *in Greke*, whan thou were yonge, that in the entree, *or in the celere*, of Iupiter, ther ben couched two tonnes; that on is ful of good, that other is ful of harm? What

right hast thou to pleyne, yif thou hast taken more plentevously of the goode syde, *that is to seyn, of my richesses and prosperites;* and what eek if I ne be nat al departed fro thee? What eek yif my mutabilitee yiveth thee rightful cause of hope to han yit beter thinges? Natheles dismaye thee nat in thy thought; and thou that art put in the comune realme of alle, ne desyre nat to liven by thyn only propre right.

METRE II.

Si quantas rapidis flatibus incius.

Though Plentee, *that is goddesse of richesses,* hielde adoun with ful horn, and withdraweth nat hir hand, as many richesses as the see torneth upward sandes whan it is moeved with ravisshinge blastes, or elles as many richesses as ther shynen brighte sterres on hevene on the sterry nightes; yit, for al that, mankinde nolde not cese to wepe wrecchede pleyntes. And al be it so that god receyveth gladly hir preyers, and yiveth them (as fool-large) moche gold, and aparaileth coveitous men with noble or clere honours: yit semeth hem haven y-geten no-thing, but alwey hir cruel ravyne, devouringe al that they han geten, sheweth other gapinges; *that is to seyn, gapen and desyren yit after mo richesses.* What brydles mighten withholden, to any certein ende, the desordenee covetise of men, whan, ever the rather that it fleteth in large yiftes, the more ay brenneth in hem the thurst of havinge? Certes he that, quakinge and dredful, weneth him-selven nedy, he ne liveth nevermore riche."

PROSE III.

Hiis igitur si pro se tecum Fortuna loqueretur.

Therfor, yif that Fortune spake with thee for hir-self in this manere, forsothe thou ne haddest nat what thou mightest answere. And, if thou hast any-thing wherwith thou mayest rightfully defenden thy compleint, it behoveth thee to shewen it; and I wol yeven thee space to tellen it.'

'Certeynly,' quod I thanne, 'thise beth faire thinges, and enointed with hony swetenesse of rethorike and musike; and only whyl they ben herd they ben delicious. But to wrecches is a depper felinge of harm; *this is to seyn, that wrecches felen the harmes that they suffren more grevously than the remedies or the delites of thise wordes mowen gladen or comforten hem;* so that, whan thise thinges stinten for to soune in eres, the sorwe that is inset greveth the thought.'

'Right so is it,' quod she. 'For thise ne ben yit none remedies of thy maladye; but they ben a maner norisshinges of thy sorwe, yit rebel ayein thy curacioun. For whan that tyme is, I shal moeve swiche thinges that percen hem-self depe. But natheles, that thou shalt not wilne to leten thyself a wrecche, hast thou foryeten the noumber and the manere of thy welefulnesse? I holde me stille, how that the soverayne men of the citee token thee in cure and kepinge, whan thou were orphelin of fader and moder, and were chosen in affinitee of princes of the citee; and thou bigunne rather to be leef and dere than forto ben a neighbour; the whiche thing is the most precious kinde of any propinquitee or alyaunce that may ben. Who is it that ne seide tho that thou were right weleful, with so grete a nobleye of thy fadres-in-lawe, and with the chastitee of thy wyf, and with the opportunitee and noblesse of thy masculin children, *that is to seyn, thy sones?* And over al this—me list to passen the comune thinges—how thou haddest in thy youthe dignitees that weren werned to olde men. But it delyteth me to comen now to the singuler uphepinge of thy welefulnesse. Yif any fruit of mortal thinges may han any weighte or prys of welefulnesse,

mightest thou ever foryeten, for any charge of harm that mighte bifalle, the remembraunce of thilke day that thou saye thy two sones maked conseileres, and y-lad to-gedere fro thyn house under so greet assemblee of senatoures and under the blythenesse of poeple; and whan thou saye hem set in the court in here chayeres of dignitees? Thou, rethorien or pronouncere of kinges preysinges, deservedest glorie of wit and of eloquence, whan thou, sittinge bitwene thy two sones, conseileres, in the place that highte Circo, fulfuldest the abydinge of the multitude of poeple that was sprad abouten thee, with so large preysinge and laude, as men singen in victories. Tho yave thou wordes to Fortune, as I trowe, *that is to seyn, tho feffedest thou Fortune with glosinge wordes and deceivedest hir*, whan she acoyede thee and norisshede thee as hir owne delyces. Thou bere away of Fortune a yifte, *that is to seyn, swiche guerdoun*, that she never yaf to privee man. Wilt thou therfor leye a rekeninge with Fortune? She hath now twinkled first upon thee with a wikkede eye. Yif thou considere the noumbre and the manere of thy blisses and of thy sorwes, thou mayst nat forsaken that thou art yit blisful. For if thou therfor wenest thy-self nat weleful, for thinges that tho semeden ioyful ben passed, ther nis nat why thou shuldest wene thy-self a wrecche; for thinges that semen now sorye passen also.

Art thou now comen first, a sodein gest, in-to the shadwe or tabernacle of this lyf; or trowest thou that any stedefastnesse be in mannes thinges, whan ofte a swift houre dissolveth the same man; *that is to seyn, whan the soule departeth fro the body?* For, al-though that selde is ther any feith that fortunous thinges wolen dwellen, yit natheles the laste day of a mannes lyf is a manere deeth to Fortune, and also to thilke that hath dwelt. And therfor, what, wenestow, thar [thee] recche, yif thou forlete hir in deyinge, or elles that she, *Fortune*, forlete thee in fleeinge awey?

Metre III.

Cum polo Phebus roseis quadrigis.

Whan Phebus, the sonne, biginneth to spreden his cleernesse with rosene chariettes, thanne the sterre, y-dimmed, paleth hir whyte cheres, by the flambes of the sonne that overcometh the sterre-light. *This is to seyn, whan the sonne is risen, the dey-sterre wexeth pale, and leseth hir light for the grete brightnesse of the sonne.*

Whan the wode wexeth rody of rosene floures, in the first somer sesoun, thorugh the brethe of the winde Zephirus that wexeth warm, yif the cloudy wind Auster blowe felliche, than goth awey the fairenesse of thornes.

Ofte the see is cleer and calm withoute moevinge flodes; and ofte the horrible wind Aquilon moeveth boilinge tempestes and over-whelveth the see.

Yif the forme of this worlde is so selde stable, and yif it turneth by so many entrechaunginges, wolt thou thanne trusten in the tomblinge fortunes of men? Wolt thou trowen on flittinge goodes? It is certein and establisshed by lawe perdurable, that no-thing that is engendred nis stedefast ne stable.'

Prose IV.

Tunc ego, uera, inquam, commemoras.

Thanne seide I thus: 'O norice of alle vertues, thou seist ful sooth; ne I ne may nat forsake the right swifte cours of my prosperitee; *that is to seyn, that prosperitee ne be comen to me wonder swiftly and sone.* But this is a thing that greetly smerteth me whan it remembreth me. For in alle adversitee of fortune, the most unsely kinde of contrarious fortune is to han ben weleful.'

'But that thou,' quod she, 'abyest thus the torment of thy false opinioun, that mayst thou nat rightfully blamen ne aretten to thinges: *as who seith, for thou hast yit many habundaunces of thinges.*

Text. For al be it so that the ydel name of aventurous welefulnesse moeveth thee now, it is leveful that thou rekne with me of how manye grete thinges thou hast yit plentee. And therfor, yif that thilke thing that thou haddest for most precious in al thy richesse of fortune be kept to thee yit, by the grace of god, unwemmed and undefouled, mayst thou thanne pleyne rightfully upon the meschef of Fortune, sin thou hast yit thy beste thinges? Certes, yit liveth in good point thilke precious honour of mankinde, Symacus, thy wyves fader, which that is a man naked alle of sapience and of vertu; the whiche man thou woldest byen redely with the prys of thyn owne lyf. He biwayleth the wronges that men don to thee, and nat for him-self; for he liveth in sikernesse of any sentences put ayeins him. And yit liveth thy wyf, that is atempre of wit, and passinge other wimmen in clennesse of chastetee; and for I wol closen shortely hir bountees, she is lyk to hir fader. I telle thee wel, that she liveth looth of this lyf, and kepeth to thee only hir goost; and is al maat and overcomen by wepinge and sorwe for desyr of thee, in the whiche thing only I moot graunten that thy welefulnesse is amenused. What shal I seyn eek of thy two sones, conseilours, of whiche, as of children of hir age, ther shyneth the lyknesse of the wit of hir fader or of hir elder fader? And sin the sovereyn cure of alle mortel folk is to saven hir owen lyves, O how weleful art thou, yif thou knowe thy goodes! For yit ben ther thinges dwelled to theeward, that no man douteth that they ne ben more dereworthe to thee than thyn owen lyf. And for-thy drye thy teres, for yit nis nat everich fortune al hateful to thee-ward, ne over greet tempest hath nat yit fallen upon thee, whan that thyn ancres cleven faste, that neither wolen suffren the counfort of this tyme present ne the hope of tyme cominge to passen ne to faylen.'

'And I preye,' quod I, 'that faste moten they halden; for whyles that they halden, how-so-ever that thinges ben, I shal wel fleten forth and escapen; but thou mayst wel seen how grete aparayles and aray that me lakketh, that ben passed away fro me.'

'I have som-what avaunsed and forthered thee,' quod she, 'yif that thou anoye nat or forthinke nat of al thy fortune: *as who seith, I have somwhat comforted thee, so that thou tempest thee nat thus with al thy fortune, sin thou hast yit thy beste thinges.* But I may nat suffren thy delices, that pleynest so wepinge and anguissous, for that ther lakketh som-what to thy welefulnesse. For what man is so sad or of so parfit welefulnesse, that he ne stryveth and pleyneth on som halve ayen the qualitee of his estat? For-why ful anguissous thing is the condicioun of mannes goodes; for either it cometh nat al-togider to a wight, or elles it last nat perpetuel. For sum man hath grete richesses, but he is ashamed of his ungentel linage; and som is renowned of noblesse of kinrede, but he is enclosed in so grete anguisshe of nede of thinges, that him were lever that he were unknowe. And som man haboundeth both in richesse and noblesse, but yit he bewaileth his chaste lyf, for he ne hath no wyf. And som man is wel and selily y-maried, but he hath no children, and norissheth his richesses to the eyres of strange folkes. And som man is gladed with children, but he wepeth ful sory for the trespas of his sone or of his doughter. And for this ther ne acordeth no wight lightly to the condicioun of his fortune; for alwey to every man ther is in somwhat that, unassayed, he ne wot nat;

or elles he dredeth that he hath assayed. And adde this also, that every weleful man hath a ful delicat felinge; so that, but-yif alle thinges bifalle at his owne wil, for he is impacient, or is nat used to han non adversitee, anon he is throwen adoun for every litel thing. And ful litel thinges ben tho that withdrawen the somme or the perfecciоun of blisfulnesse fro hem that ben most fortunat. How many men, trowest thou, wolden demen hem-self to ben almost in hevene, yif they mighten atayne to the leest party of the remnaunt of thy fortune? This same place that thou clepest exil, is contree to hem that enhabiten heer, and forthy nothing [is] wrecched but whan thou wenest it: *as who seith, thou thy-self, ne no wight elles, nis a wrecche, but whan he weneth him-self a wrecche by reputaciоun of his corage.* And ayeinward, alle fortune is blisful to a man by the agreabletee or by the egalitee of him that suffreth it.

What man is that, that is so weleful, that nolde changen his estat whan he hath lost pacience? The swetnesse of mannes welefulnesse is sprayned with many biternesses; the whiche welefulnesse, al-though it seme swete and ioyful to hem that useth it, yit may it nat ben with-holden that it ne goth away whan it wole. Thanne is it wel sene, how wrecched is the blisfulnesse of mortal thinges, that neither it dureth perpetuel with hem that every fortune receiven agreablely or egaly, ne it delyteth nat in al to hem that ben anguissous. O ye mortal folk, what seke ye thanne blisfulnesse out of your-self, whiche that is put in your-self? Errour and folye confoundeth yow.

I shal shewe thee shortely the poynt of sovereyne blisfulnesse. Is ther anything more precious to thee than thy-self? Thou wolt answere, "nay." Thanne, yif it so be that thou art mighty over thy-self, *that is to seyn, by tranquillitee of thy sowle*, than hast thou thing in thy power that thou noldest never lesen, ne Fortune ne may nat beneme it thee. And that thou mayst knowe that blisfulnesse ne may nat standen in thinges that ben fortunous and temporel, now understonde and gader it to-gidere thus: Yif blisfulnesse be the sovereyn good of nature that liveth by resoun, ne thilke thing nis nat sovereyn good that may be taken awey in any wyse, (for more worthy thing and more digne is thilke thing that may nat ben taken awey); than sheweth it wel, that the unstablenesse of fortune may nat atayne to receiven verray blisfulnesse. And yit more-over: what man that this toumbling welefulnesse ledeth, either he woot that it is chaungeable, or elles he woot it nat. And yif he woot it nat, what blisful fortune may ther be in the blindnesse of ignorance? And yif he woot that it is chaungeable, he moot alwey ben adrad that he ne lese that thing that he ne doubteth nat but that he may lesen it; *as who seith, he mot ben alwey agast, lest he lese that he wot wel he may lese it.* For which, the continuel dreed that he hath ne suffreth him nat to ben weleful. Or yif he lese it, he weneth to be dispysed and forleten. Certes eek, that is a ful litel good that is born with evene herte whan it is lost; *that is to seyn, that men do no more fors of the lost than of the havinge.* And for as moche as thou thy-self art he, to whom it hath been shewed and proved by ful manye demonstracioуns, as I wot wel, that the sowles of men ne mowe nat deyen in no wyse; and eek sin it is cleer and certein, that fortunous welefulnesse endeth by the deeth of the body; it may nat ben douted that, yif that deeth may take awey blisfulnesse, that alle the kinde of mortal thinges ne descendeth in-to wrecchednesse by the ende of the deeth. And sin we knowen wel, that many a man hath sought the fruit of blisfulnesse nat only with suffringe of deeth, but eek with suffringe of peynes and tormentes; how mighte than this present

lyf maken men blisful, sin that, whan thilke selve lyf is ended, it ne maketh folk no wrecches?

METRE IV.

Quisquis uolet perennem Cautus ponere sedem.

What maner man, stable and war, that wole founden him a perdurable sete, and ne wole nat ben cast down with the loude blastes of the wind Eurus; and wole despyse the see, manasinge with flodes; lat him eschewen to bilde on the cop of the mountaigne or in the moiste sandes. For the felle wind Auster tormenteth the cop of the mountaigne with all his strengthes; and the lause sandes refusen to beren the hevy wighte.

And forthy, if thou wolt fleen the perilous aventure, *that is to seyn, of the worlde;* have minde certeinly to ficchen thyn hous of a merye site in a lowe stoon. For al-though the wind, troubling the see, thondre with over-throwinges, thou that art put in quiete, and weleful by strengthe of thy palis, shalt leden a cleer age, scorninge the woodnesses and the ires of the eyr.

PROSE V.

Set cum rationum iam in te.

But for as moche as the norisshinges of my resouns descenden now in-to thee, I trowe it were tyme to usen a litel strenger medicynes. Now understond heer, al were it so that the yiftes of Fortune ne were nat brutel ne transitorie, what is ther in hem that may be thyn in any tyme, or elles that it nis foul, yif that it be considered and loked perfitly? Richesses, ben they precious by the nature of hem-self, or elles by the nature of thee? What is most worth of richesses? Is it nat gold or might of moneye assembled? Certes, thilke gold and thilke moneye shyneth and yeveth betere renoun to hem that despenden it thanne to thilke folk that mokeren it; for avarice maketh alwey mokereres to ben hated, and largesse maketh folk cleer of renoun. For sin that swich thing as is transferred fram o man to another ne may nat dwellen with no man; certes, thanne is thilke moneye precious whan it is translated into other folk and stenteth to ben had, by usage of large yevinge *of him that hath yeven it.* And also: yif that al the moneye that is over-al in the worlde were gadered toward o man, it sholde maken alle other men to ben nedy as of that. And certes a voys al hool, *that is to seyn, with-oute amenusinge,* fulfilleth to-gidere the hering of moche folk; but certes, youre richesses ne mowen nat passen in-to moche folke with-oute amenusinge. And whan they ben apassed, nedes they maken hem pore that for-gon the richesses.

O! streite and nedy clepe I this richesse, sin that many folk ne may nat han it al, ne al may it nat comen to o man with-outen povertee of alle other folk! And the shyninge of gemmes, *that I clepe precious stones,* draweth it nat the eyen of folk to hem-ward, *that is to seyn, for the beautee?* But certes, yif ther were beautee or bountee in the shyninge of stones, thilke cleernesse is of the stones hem-self, and nat of men; for whiche I wondre gretly that men mervailen on swiche thinges. For-why, what thing is it, that yif it wanteth moeving and Ioynture of sowle and body, that by right mighte semen a fair creature to him that hath a sowle of resoun? For al be it so that gemmes drawen to hem-self a litel of the laste beautee of the world, through the entente of hir creatour and through the distinccioun of hem-self; yit, for as mochel as they ben put under youre excellence, they ne han nat deserved by no wey that ye sholden mervailen on hem. And the beautee of feldes, delyteth it nat mochel un-to yow?'

Boece. 'Why sholde it nat delyten us, sin that it is a right fair porcioun

of the right faire werke, *that is to seyn, of this world?* And right so ben we gladed som-tyme of the face of the see whan it is cleer; and also mervailen we on the hevene and on the sterres, and on the sonne and on mone.'

Philosophye. 'Aperteneth,' quod she, 'any of thilke thinges to thee? Why darst thou glorifyen thee in the shyninge of any swiche thinges? Art thou distingwed and embelised by the springinge floures of the first somer sesoun, or swelleth thy plentee in the fruites of somer? Why art thou ravisshed with ydel Ioyes? Why embracest thou straunge goodes as they weren thyne? Fortune ne shal never maken that swiche thinges ben thyne, that nature of thinges hath maked foreine fro thee. Sooth is that, withouten doute, the frutes of the erthe owen to ben to the norissinge of bestes. And yif thou wolt fulfille thy nede after that it suffyseth to nature, than is it no nede that thou seke after the superfluitee of fortune. For with ful fewe things and with ful litel thinges nature halt hir apayed; and yif thou wolt achoken the fulfillinge of nature with superfluitees, certes, thilke thinges that thou wolt thresten or pouren in-to nature shulen ben unioyful to thee, or elles anoyous. Wenest thou eek that it be a fair thing to shyne with dyverse clothinge? Of whiche clothinge yif the beautee be agreeable to loken up-on, I wol mervailen on the nature of the matere of thilke clothes, or elles on the werkman that wroughte hem. But also a long route of meynee, maketh that a blisful man? The whiche servants, yif they ben vicious of condiciouns, it is a great charge and a distruccioun to the hous, and a greet enemy to the lord him-self. And yif they ben goode men, how shal straunge or foreine goodnesse ben put in the noumbre of thy richesse? So that, by all these foreseide thinges, it is clearly y-shewed, that never oon of thilke thinges that thou acountedest for thyne goodes nas nat thy good. In the whiche thinges, yif ther be no beautee to ben desyred, why sholdest thou ben sory yif thou lese hem, or why sholdest thou reioysen thee to holden hem? For yif they ben faire of hir owne kinde, what aperteneth that to thee? For al so wel sholden they han ben faire by hem-selve, though they weren departed fram alle thyne richesses. Forwhy faire ne precious ne weren they nat, for that they comen among thy richesses; but, for they semeden faire and precious, ther-for thou haddest lever rekne hem amonges thy richesses.

But what desirest thou of Fortune with so grete a noise, and with so grete a fare? I trowe thou seke to dryve awey nede with habundaunce of thinges; but certes, it torneth to you al in the contrarie. Forwhy certes, it nedeth of ful manye helpinges to kepen the diversitee of precious ostelments. And sooth it is, that of manye thinges han they nede that manye thinges han; and ayeinward, of litel nedeth hem that mesuren hir fille after the nede of kinde, and nat after the outrage of coveityse. Is it thanne so, that ye men ne han no proper good y-set in you, for which ye moten seken outward youre goodes in foreine and subgit thinges? So is thanne the condicioun of thinges torned up-sodown, that a man, that is a devyne beest by merite of his resoun, thinketh that him-self nis neither faire ne noble, but-yif it be thorugh possessioun of ostelments that ne han no sowles. And certes, al other thinges ben apayed of hir owne beautee; but ye men, that ben semblable to god by your resonable thought, desiren to aparailen your excellent kinde of the lowest thinges; ne ye understonden nat how greet a wrong ye don to your creatour. For he wolde that mankinde were most worthy and noble of any othre erthely thinges; and ye threste adoun your dignitees

benethe the lowest thinges. For yif that al the good of every thinge be more precious than is thilke thing whos that the good is: sin ye demen that the fouleste thinges ben youre goodes, thanne submitten ye and putten your-selven under tho fouleste thinges by your estimacioun; and certes, this tydeth nat with-oute youre desertes. For certes, swiche is the condicioun of alle mankinde, that only whan it hath knowinge of it-selve, than passeth it in noblesse alle other thinges; and whan it forleteth the knowinge of it-self, than is it brought binethen alle beestes. For-why al other livinge beestes han of kinde to knowe nat hem-self; but whan that men leten the knowinge of hemself, it cometh hem of vice. But how brode sheweth the errour and the folye of yow men, that wenen that any thing may been aparailed with straunge aparailements! But for sothe that may nat ben doon. For yif a wight shyneth with thinges that ben put to him, *as thus, if thilke thinges shynen with which a man is aparailed*, certes, thilke thinges ben comended and preysed with which he is aparailed; but natheles, the thing that is covered and wrapped under that dwelleth in his filthe.

And I denye that thilke thing be good that anoyeth him that hath it. Gabbe I of this? Thou wolt seye "nay." Certes, richesses han anoyed ful ofte hem that han tho richesses; sin that every wikked shrewe, (and for his wikkednesse the more gredy after other folkes richesses, wher-so ever it be in any place, be it gold or precious stones), weneth him only most worthy that hath hem. Thou thanne, that so bisy dredest now the swerd and now the spere, yif thou haddest entred in the path of this lyf a voide wayferinge man, than woldest thou singe beforn the theef; *as who seith, a pore man, that berth no richesse on him by the weye, may boldely singe biforn theves, for he hath nat wherof to ben robbed.* O precious and right cleer is the blisfulnesse of mortal richesses, that, whan thou hast geten it, than hast thou lorn thy sikernesse!

Metre V.

Felix nimium prior etas.

Blisful was the first age of men! They helden hem apayed with the metes that the trewe feldes broughten forth. They ne distroyede nor deceivede nat hem-self with outrage. They weren wont lightly to slaken hir hunger at even with acornes of okes. They ne coude nat medly the yifte of Bachus to the cleer hony; *that is to seyn, they coude make no piment nor clarree;* ne they coude nat medle the brighte fleeses of the contree of Seriens with the venim of Tyrie; *this is to seyn, they coude nat deyen whyte fleeses of Serien contree with the blode of a maner shelfisshe that men finden in Tyrie, with whiche blood men deyen purpur.* They slepen hoolsom slepes up-on the gras, and dronken of the renninge wateres; and layen under the shadwes of the heye pyn-trees. Ne no gest ne straungere ne carf yit the heye see with ores or with shippes; ne they ne hadde seyn yit none newe strondes, to leden marchaundyse in-to dyverse contrees. Tho weren the cruel clariouns ful hust and ful stille, ne blood y-shad by egre hate ne hadde nat deyed yit armures. For wher-to or which woodnesse of enemys wolde first moeven armes, whan they seyen cruel woundes, ne none medes be of blood y-shad?

I wolde that oure tymes sholde torne ayein to the olde maneres! But the anguissous love of havinge brenneth in folk more cruely than the fyr of the mountaigne Ethna, *that ay brenneth.* Allas! what was he that first dalf up the gobetes or the weightes of gold covered under erthe, and the precious stones that wolden han ben hid? He dalf up precious perils. *That is to seyn, that*

he that hem first up dalf, he dalf up a precious peril; for-why for the preciousnesse of swiche thinge, hath many man ben in peril.

Prose VI.

Quid autem de dignitatibus.

But what shal I seye of dignitees and of powers, the whiche ye men, that neither knowen verray dignitee ne verray power, areysen hem as heye as the hevene? The whiche dignitees and powers, yif they comen to any wikked man, they don as grete damages and destruccioun as doth the flaumbe of the mountaigne Ethna, whan the flaumbe walweth up; ne no deluge ne doth so cruel harmes. Certes, thee remembreth wel, as I trowe, that thilke dignitee that men clepen the imperie of consulers, the whiche that whylom was beginninge of fredom, youre eldres coveiteden to han don away that dignitee, for the pryde of the consulers. And right for the same pryde your eldres, biforn that tyme, hadden don awey, out of the citee of Rome, the kinges name; *that is to seyn, they nolde han no lenger no king.* But now, yif so be that dignitees and powers be yeven to goode men, the whiche thing is ful selde, what agreable thing is ther in tho dignitees or powers but only the goodnesse of folkes that usen hem? And therfor it is thus, that honour ne comth nat to vertu for cause of dignitee, but ayeinward honour comth to dignitee for cause of vertu. But whiche is thilke youre dereworthe power, that is so cleer and so requerable? O ye ertheliche bestes, considere ye nat over which thinge that it semeth that ye han power? Now yif thou saye a mous amonges other mys, that chalaunged to him-self-ward right and power over alle other mys, how greet scorn woldest thou han of it! **Glosa.** *So fareth it by men; the body hath power over the body.* For yif thou loke wel up-on the body of a wight, what thing shalt thou finde more freele than is mankinde; the whiche men wel ofte ben slayn with bytinge of smale flyes, or elles with the entringe of crepinge wormes in-to the privetees of mannes body? But wher shal man finden any man that may exercen or haunten any right up-on another man, but only up-on his body, or elles up-on thinges that ben lowere than the body, the whiche I clepe fortunous possessiouns? Mayst thou ever have any comaundement over a free corage? Mayst thou remuen fro the estat of his propre reste a thought that is clyvinge to-gidere in him-self by stedefast resoun? As whylom a tyraunt wende to confounde a free man of corage, and wende to constreyne him by torment, to maken him discoveren and acusen folk that wisten of a coniuracioun, *which I clepe a confederacie*, that was cast ayeins this tyraunt; but this free man boot of his owne tonge and caste it in the visage of thilke wode tyraunt; so that the torments that this tyraunt wende to han maked matere of crueltee, this wyse man maked it matere of vertu.

But what thing is it that a man may don to another man, that he ne may receyven the same thing of othre folk in him-self: *or thus, what may a man don to folk, that folk ne may don him the same?* I have herd told of Busirides, that was wont to sleen his gestes that herberweden in his hous; and he was sleyn him-self of Ercules that was his gest. Regulus hadde taken in bataile many men of Affrike and cast hem in-to feteres; but sone after he moste yeve his handes to ben bounde with the cheynes of hem that he hadde whylom overcomen. Wenest thou thanne that he be mighty, that hath no power to don a thing, that othre ne may don in him that he doth in othre? And yit more-over, yif it so were that thise dignitees or poweres hadden any propre or natural goodnesse in hem-self, never nolden they comen to shrewes. For contrarious thinges ne

ben nat wont to ben y-felawshiped to-gidere. Nature refuseth that contrarious thinges ben y-ioigned. And so, as I am in certein that right wikked folk han dignitees ofte tyme, than sheweth it wel that dignitees and powers ne ben nat goode of hir owne kinde; sin that they suffren hem-self to cleven or ioinen hem to shrewes. And certes, the same thing may I most digneliche iugen and seyn of alle the yiftes of fortune that most plentevously comen to shrewes; of the whiche yiftes, I trowe that it oughte ben considered, that no man douteth that he nis strong in whom he seeth strengthe; and in whom that swiftnesse is, sooth it is that he is swift. Also musike maketh musiciens, and phisike maketh phisiciens, and rhethorike rethoriens. For-why the nature of every thing maketh his propretee, ne it is nat entremedled with the effects of thre contrarious thinges; and, as of wil, it chaseth out thinges that ben to it coptrarie. But certes, richesse may not restreyne avarice unstaunched; ne power ne maketh nat a man mighty over him-self, whiche that vicious lustes holden destreyned with cheynes that ne mowen nat be unbounden. And dignitees that ben yeven to shrewede folk nát only ne maketh hem nat digne, but it sheweth rather al openly that they ben unworthy and undigne. And why is it thus? Certes, for ye han Ioye to clepen thinges with false names that beren hem alle in the contrarie; the whiche names ben ful ofte reproeved by the effecte of the same thinges; so that thise ilke richesses ne oughten nat by right to ben cleped richesses; ne swich power ne oughte nat ben cleped power; ne swich dignitee ne oughte nat ben cleped dignitee.

And at the laste, I may conclude the same thing of alle the yiftes of Fortune, in which ther nis nothing to ben desired, ne that hath in him-self naturel bountee, as it is ful wel y-sene. For neither they ne ioignen hem nat alwey to goode men, ne maken hem alwey goode to whom that they ben y-ioigned.

Metre VI.

Nouimus quantas dederit ruinas.

We han wel knowen how many grete harmes and destruccioun weren don *by the emperor Nero.* He leet brenne the citee of Rome, and made sleen the senatoures. And he, cruel, whylom slew his brother; and he was maked moist with the blood of his moder; *that is to seyn, he leet sleen and slitten the body of his moder, to seen wher he was conceived*; and he loked on every halve up-on her colde dede body, ne no tere ne wette his face, but *he was so hard-herted that* he mighte ben domes-man or Iuge of hir dede beautee. And natheles, yit governede this *Nero* by ceptre alle the poeples that Phebus the sonne may seen, cominge from his outereste arysinge til he hyde his bemes under the wawes; *that is to seyn, he governed alle the poeples by ceptre imperial that the sonne goth aboute, from est to west.* And eek *this Nero governed by ceptre* alle the poeples that ben under the colde sterres that highten "septem triones"; *this is to seyn, he governede alle the poeples that ben under the party of the north.* And eek *Nero governed* alle the poeples that the violent wind Nothus scorkleth, and baketh the brenning sandes by his drye hete; *that is to seyn, alle the poeples in the south.* But yit ne mighte nat al his hye power torne the woodnesse of this wikked Nero. Allas! it is a grevous fortune, as ofte as wikked swerd is ioigned to cruel venim; *that is to seyn, venimous crueltee to lordshippe.'*

Prose VII.

Tum ego, scis, inquam.

Thanne seyde I thus: 'Thou wost wel thy-self that the coveitise of

mortal thinges ne hadde never lordshipe of me; but I have wel desired matere of thinges to done, *as who seith, I desire to han matere of governaunce over comunalitees*, for vertu, stille, ne sholde nat elden; ' *that is to seyn, that [him] leste that, or he wex olde, his vertu, that lay now ful stille, ne should nat perisshe unexercised in governaunce of comune; for which men mighten speken or wryten of his goode governement.*

Philosophye. 'For sothe,' quod she, 'and that is a thing that may drawen to governaunce swiche hertes as ben worthy and noble of hir nature; but natheles, it may nat drawen or tollen swiche hertes as ben y-brought to the fulle perfeccioun of vertu, that is to seyn, coveitise of glorie and renoun to han wel administred the comune thinges or don gode desertes to profit of the comune. For see now and considere, how litel and how voide of alle prys is thilke glorie. Certein thing is, as thou hast lerned by the demonstracioun of astronomye, that al the environinge of the erthe aboute ne halt nat but the resoun of a prikke at regard of the greetnesse of hevene; that is to seyn, that yif ther were maked comparisoun of the erthe to the greetnesse of hevene, men wolden iugen in al, that the erthe ne helde no space. Of the whiche litel regioun of this worlde, the ferthe partye is enhabited with livinge bestes that we knowen, as thou thyself hast y-lerned by Tholomee that proveth it. And yif thou haddest with-drawen and abated in thy thought fro thilke ferthe partye as moche space as the see and the mareys contenen and over-goon, and as moche space as the regioun of droughte over-streccheth, *that is to seyn, sandes and desertes*, wel unnethe sholde ther dwellen a right streit place to the habitacioun of men. And ye thanne, that ben environed and closed with-in the leste prikke of thilke prikke, thinken ye to manifesten your renoun and don youre name to ben born forth? But your glorie, that is so narwe and so streite y-throngen in-to so litel boundes, how mochel coveiteth it in largesse and in greet doinge? And also sette this there-to: that many a nacioun, dyverse of tonge and of maneres and eek of resoun of hir livinge, ben enhabited in the clos of thilke litel habitacle; to the whiche nacioun, what for difficultee of weyes and what for dyversitee of langages, and what for defaute of unusage and entrecomuninge of marchaundise, nat only the names of singuler men ne may nat strecchen, but eek the fame of citees ne may nat strecchen. At the laste, certes, in the tyme of Marcus Tullius, as him-self writ in his book, that the renoun of the comune of Rome ne hadde nat yit passed ne cloumben over the mountaigne that highte Caucasus; and yit was, thilke tyme, Rome wel waxen and greetly redouted of the Parthes and eek of other folk enhabitinge aboute. Seestow nat thanne how streit and how compressed is thilke glorie that ye travailen aboute to shewe and to multiplye? May thanne the glorie of a singuler Romaine strecchen thider as the fame of the name of Rome may nat climben ne passen? And eek, seestow nat that the maneres of dyverse folk and eek hir lawes ben discordaunt among hem-self; so that thilke thing that som men iugen worthy of preysinge, other folk iugen that it is worthy of torment? And ther-of comth it that, though a man delyte him in preysinge of his renoun, he may nat in no wyse bringen forth ne spreden his name to many maner poeples. There-for every man oughte to ben apayed of his glorie that is publisshed among his owne neighbours; and thilke noble renoun shal ben restreyned within the boundes of o manere folke. But how many a man, that was ful noble in his tyme, hath the wrecched and nedy foryetinge of wryteres put out of minde and don awey! Al be it so that,

certes, thilke wrytinges profiten litel; the whiche wrytinges long and derk elde doth awey, bothe hem and eek hir autours. But ye men semen to geten yow a perdurabletee, whan ye thenken that, in tyme to-cominge, your fame shal lasten. But natheles, yif thou wolt maken comparisoun to the endeles spaces of eternitee, what thing hast thou by whiche thou mayst reioysen thee of long lastinge of thy name? For yif ther were maked comparisoun of the abydinge of a moment to ten thousand winter, for as mochel as bothe the spaces ben ended, yit hath the moment som porcioun of it, al-though it litel be. But natheles, thilke selve noumbre of yeres, and eek as many yeres as ther-to may be multiplyed, ne may nat, certes, ben comparisoned to the perdurabletee that is endeles; for of thinges that han ende may be maked comparisoun, but of thinges that ben with-outen ende, to thinges that han ende, may be maked no comparisoun. And forthy is it that, al-though renoun, of as long tyme as ever thee list to thinken, were thought to the regard of eternitee, that is unstaunchable and infinit, it ne sholde nat only semen litel, but pleynliche right naught. But ye men, certes, ne conne don nothing a-right, but-yif it be for the audience of poeple and for ydel rumours; and ye forsaken the grete worthinesse of conscience and of vertu, and ye seken your guerdouns of the smale wordes of straunge folk.

Have now heer and understonde, in the lightnesse of swich pryde and veine glorie, how a man scornede festivaly and merily swich vanitee. Whylom ther was a man that hadde assayed with stryvinge wordes another man, the whiche, nat for usage of verray vertu but for proud veine glorie, had taken up-on him falsly the name of a philosophre. This rather man *that I spak of* thoughte he wolde assaye, wher he, thilke, were a philosophre or no; that is to seyn, yif that he wolde han suffred lightly in pacience the wronges that weren don un-to him. This feynede philosophre took pacience a litel whyle, and, whan he hadde received wordes of outrage, he, as in stryvinge ayein and reioysinge of him-self, seyde at the laste right thus: "understondest thou nat that I am a philosophre?" That other man answerde ayein ful bytingly, and seyde: "I hadde wel understonden it, yif thou haddest holden thy tonge stille." But what is it to thise noble worthy men (for, certes, of swiche folke speke I) that seken glorie with vertu? What is it?' quod she; 'what atteyneth fame to swiche folk, whan the body is resolved by the deeth at the laste? For yif it so be that men dyen in al, *that is to seyn, body and sowle*, the whiche thing our resoun defendeth us to bileven, thanne is ther no glorie in no wyse. *For what sholde thilke glorie ben*, whan he, of whom thilke glorie is seyd to be, nis right naught in no wyse? And yif the sowle, whiche that hath in it-self science of goode werkes, unbounden fro the prison of the erthe, wendeth frely to the hevene, despyseth it nat thanne alle erthely occupacioun; and, being in hevene, reioyseth that it is exempt fro alle erthely thinges? *As who seith, thanne rekketh the sowle of no glorie of renoun of this world.*

METRE VII.

Quicunque solam mente praecipiti petit.

Who-so that, with overthrowinge thought, only seketh glorie of fame, and weneth that it be sovereyn good: lat him loken up-on the brode shewinge contrees of hevene, and up-on the streite site of this erthe; and he shal ben ashamed of the encrees of his name, that may nat fulfille the litel compas *of the erthe*. O! what coveiten proude folk to liften up hir nekkes in ydel in the dedly yok *of this worlde?* For al-though that re-

noun y-sprad, passinge to ferne poeples, goth by dyverse tonges; and al-though that grete houses or kinredes shynen with clere titles of honours; yit, natheles, deeth despyseth alle heye glorie of fame: and deeth wrappeth to-gidere the heye hevedes and the lowe, and maketh egal and evene the heyeste to the loweste. Wher wonen now the bones of trewe Fabricius? What is now Brutus, or stierne Catoun? The thinne fame, yit lastinge, of hir ydel names, is marked with a fewe lettres; but although that we han knowen the faire wordes of the fames of hem, it is nat yeven to knowe hem that ben dede and consumpte. Liggeth thanne stille, al outrely unknowable; ne fame ne maketh yow nat knowe. And yif ye wene to liven the longer for winde of your mortal name, whan o cruel day shal ravisshe yow, thanne is the seconde deeth dwellinge un-to yow.'

Glose. *The first deeth he clepeth heer the departinge of the body and the sowle; and the seconde deeth he clepeth, as heer, the stintinge of the renoun of fame.*

Prose VIII.

Set ne me inexorabile contra fortunam.

'But for as mochel as thou shalt nat wenen,' quod she, 'that I bere untretable bataile ayeins fortune, yit som-tyme it bifalleth that she, deceyvable, deserveth to han right good thank of men; and that is, whan she hir-self opneth, and whan she descovereth hir frount, and sheweth hir maneres. Peraventure yit understondest thou nat that I shal seye. It is a wonder that I desire to telle, and forthy unnethe may I unpleyten my sentence with wordes; for I deme that contrarious Fortune profiteth more to men than Fortune debonaire. For alwey, whan Fortune semeth debonaire, than she lyeth falsly in bihetinge the hope of welefulnesse; but forsothe contrarious Fortune is alwey soothfast, whan she sheweth hir-self unstable thorugh hir chaunginge. The amiable Fortune deceyveth folk; the contrarie Fortune techeth. The amiable Fortune bindeth with the beautee of false goodes the hertes of folk that usen hem; the contrarie Fortune unbindeth hem by the knowinge of freele welefulnesse. The amiable Fortune mayst thou seen alwey windy and flowinge, and ever misknowinge of hir-self; the contrarie Fortune is atempre and restreyned, and wys thorugh exercise of hir adversitee. At the laste, amiable Fortune with hir flateringes draweth miswandringe men fro the sovereyne good; the contrarious Fortune ledeth ofte folk ayein to soothfast goodes, and haleth hem ayein as with an hooke. Wenest thou thanne that thou oughtest to leten this a litel thing, that this aspre and horrible Fortune hath discovered to thee the thoughtes of thy trewe freendes? Forwhy this ilke Fortune hath departed and uncovered to thee bothe the certein visages and eek the doutous visages of thy felawes. Whan she departed awey fro thee, she took awey hir freendes, and lafte thee thyne freendes. Now whan thou were riche and weleful, as thee semede, with how mochel woldest thou han bought the fulle knowinge of this, *that is to seyn, the knowinge of thy verray freendes?* Now pleyne thee nat thanne of richesse y-lorn, sin thou hast founden the moste precious kinde of richesses, that is to seyn, thy verray freendes.

Metre VIII.

Quod mundus stabili fide.

That the world with stable feith varieth acordable chaunginges; that the contrarious qualitee of elements holden among hem-self aliaunce perdurable; that Phebus the sonne with his goldene chariet bringeth forth the rosene day; that the mone hath commaundement over the nightes,

which nightes Hesperus the evesterre hath brought; that the see, greedy to flowen, constreyneth with a certein ende hise flodes, so that it is nat leveful to strecche hise brode termes or boundes up-on the erthes, *that is to seyn, to covere al the erthe:* — al this acordaunce of thinges is bounden with Love, that governeth erthe and see, and hath also commaundements to the hevenes. And yif this Love slakede the brydeles, alle thinges that now loven hem to-gederes wolden maken a bataile continuely, and stryven to fordoon the fasoun of this worlde, the whiche they now leden in acordable feith by faire moevinges. This Love halt to-gideres poeples ioigned with an holy bond, and knitteth sacrement of mariages of chaste loves; and Love endyteth lawes to trewe felawes. O! weleful were mankinde, yif thilke Love that governeth hevene governed youre corages!'

Explicit Liber secundus.

BOOK III.

Prose I.

Iam cantum illa finierat.

By this she hadde ended hir song, whan the sweetnesse of hir ditee hadde thorugh-perced me that was desirous of herkninge, and I astoned hadde yit streighte myn eres, *that is to seyn, to herkne the bet what she wolde seye;* so that a litel here-after I seyde thus: 'O thou that art sovereyn comfort of anguissous corages, so thou hast remounted and norisshed me with the weighte of thy sentences and with delyt of thy singinge; so that I trowe nat now that I be unparigal to the strokes of Fortune: *as who seyth, I dar wel now suffren al the assautes of Fortune, and wel defende me fro hir.* And tho remedies whiche that thou seydest her-biforn weren right sharpe, nat only that I am nat a-grisen of hem now, but I, desirous of heringe, axe gretely to heren the remedies.'

Than seyde she thus: 'That felede I ful wel,' quod she, 'whan that thou, ententif and stille, ravisshedest my wordes; and I abood til that thou haddest swich habite of thy thought as thou hast now; or elles til that I my-self hadde maked to thee the same habit, which that is a more verray thing. And certes, the remenaunt of thinges that ben yit to seye ben swiche, that first whan men tasten hem they ben bytinge, but whan they ben receyved withinne a wight, than ben they swete. But for thou seyst that thou art so desirous to herkne hem, with how gret brenninge woldest thou glowen, yif thou wistest whider I wol leden thee!'

'Whider is that?' quod I.

'To thilke verray welefulnesse,' quod she, 'of whiche thyn herte dremeth; but for as moche as thy sighte is ocupied and distorbed by imaginacioun *of erthely thinges*, thou mayst nat yit seen thilke selve welefulnesse.'

'Do,' quod I, 'and shewe me what is thilke verray welefulnesse, I preye thee, with-oute taryinge.'

'That wole I gladly don,' quod she, 'for the cause of thee; but I wol first marken thee by wordes and I wol enforcen me to enformen thee thilke *false* cause *of blisfulnesse* that thou more knowest; so that, whan thou hast fully bi-holden thilke false goodes, and torned thyn eyen to that other syde, thou mowe knowe the cleernesse of verray blisfulnesse.

Metre I.

Qui serere ingenuum uolet agrum.

Who-so wole sowe a feeld plentivous, lat him first delivere it fro thornes, and kerve asunder with his

hook the busshes and the fern, so that the corn may comen hevy of eres and of greynes. Hony is the more swete, yif mouthes han first tasted savoures that ben wikkid. The sterres shynen more agreably whan the wind Nothus leteth his ploungy blastes; and after that Lucifer the day-sterre hath chased awey the derke night, the day the fairere ledeth the rosene hors *of the sonne*. And right so thou, biholdinge first the false goodes, bigin to with-drawen thy nekke fro the yok *of erthely affecciouns;* and after-ward the verray goodes shollen entren in-to thy corage.'

Prose II.

Tunc defixo paullulum uisu.

Tho fastnede she a litel the sighte of hir eyen, and with-drow hir right as it were in-to the streite sete of hir thought; and bigan to speke right thus: 'Alle the cures,' quod she, 'of mortal folk, whiche that travaylen hem in many maner studies, goon certes by diverse weyes, but natheles they enforcen hem alle to comen only to oon ende of blisfulnesse. And blisfulnesse is swiche a good, that who-so that hath geten it, he ne may, over that, no-thing more desyre. And this thing is forsothe the sovereyn good that conteyneth in him-self alle manet goodes; to the whiche good yif ther failede any thing, it mighte nat ben cleped sovereyn good: for thanne were ther som good, out of this ilke sovereyn good, that mighte ben desired. Now is it cleer and certein thanne, that blisfulnesse is a parfit estat by the congregacioun of alle goodes; the whiche blisfulnesse, as I have seyd, alle mortal folk enforcen hem to geten by diverse weyes. For-why the coveitise of verray good is naturelly y-plaunted in the hertes of men; but the mis-wandringe errour mis-ledeth hem in-to false goodes. Of the whiche men som of hem wenen that sovereyn good be to liven with-oute nede of any thing, and travaylen hem to be haboundaunt of richesses. And som other men demen that sovereyn good be, for to ben right digne of reverence; and enforcen hem to ben reverenced among hir neighbours by the honours that they han y-geten. And some folk ther ben that holden, that right heigh power be sovereyn good, and enforcen hem for to regnen, or elles to ioigen hem to hem that regnen. And it semeth to some other folk, that noblesse of renoun be the sovereyn good; and hasten hem to geten glorious name by the arts of werre and of pees. And many folk mesuren and gessen that sovereyn good be Ioye and gladnesse, and wenen that it be right blisful thing to ploungen hem in voluptuous delyt. And ther ben folk that entrechaungen the causes and the endes of thise forseyde goodes, as they that desiren richesses to han power and delytes; or elles they desiren power for to han moneye, or for cause of renoun. In thise thinges, and in swiche othre thinges, is torned alle the entencioun of desiringes and of werkes of men; as thus: noblesse and favour of people, whiche that yeveth to men, as it semeth hem, a maner cleernesse of renoun; and wyf and children, that men desiren for cause of delyt and of merinesse. But forsothe, frendes ne sholden nat be rekned a-mong the godes of fortune, but of vertu; for it is a ful holy maner thing. Alle thise othre thinges, forsothe, ben taken for cause of power or elles for cause of delyt.

Certes, now am I redy to referren the goodes of the body to thise forseide thinges aboven; for it semeth that strengthe and gretnesse of body yeven power and worthinesse, and that beautee and swiftnesse yeven noblesses and glorie of renoun; and hele of body semeth yeven delyt. In alle thise thinges it semeth only that blisfulnesse is desired. For-why

thilke thing that every man desireth most over alle thinges, he demeth that it be the sovereyn good; but I have defyned that blisfulnesse is the sovereyn good; for which every wight demeth, that thilke estat that he desireth over alle thinges, that it be blisfulnesse.

Now hast thou thanne biforn thyn eyen almest al the purposed forme of the welefulnesse of man-kinde, that is to seyn, richesses, honours, power, and glorie, and delyts. The whiche delyt only considerede Epicurus, and iuged and establisshed that delyt is the sovereyn good; for as moche as alle othre thinges, as him thoughte, bi-refte awey Ioye and mirthe fram the herte. But I retorne ayein to the studies of men, of whiche men the corage alwey reherseth and seketh the sovereyn good, al be it so that it be with a derked memorie; but he not by whiche path, right as a dronken man not nat by whiche path he may retorne him to his hous. Semeth it thanne that folk folyen and erren that enforcen hem to have nede of nothing? Certes, ther nis non other thing that may so wel performe blisfulnesse, as an estat plentivous of alle goodes, that ne hath nede of non other thing, but that is suffisaunt of himself unto himself. And folyen swiche folk thanne, that wenen that thilke thing that is right good, that it be eek right worthy of honour and of reverence? Certes, nay. For that thing nis neither foul ne worthy to ben despised, that wel neigh al the entencioun of mortal folk travaylen for to geten it. And power, oughte nat that eek to ben rekened amonges goodes? What elles? For it is nat to wene that thilke thing, that is most worthy of alle thinges, be feble and with-oute strengthe. And cleernesse of renoun, oughte that to ben despised? Certes, ther may no man forsake, that al thing that is right excellent and noble, that it ne semeth to ben right cleer and renomed. For certes, it nedeth nat to seye, that blisfulnesse be [nat] anguissous ne drery, ne subgit to grevaunces ne to sorwes, sin that in right litel thinges folk seken to have and to usen that may delyten hem. Certes, thise ben the thinges that men wolen and desiren to geten. And for this cause desiren they richesses, dignitees, regnes, glorie, and delices. For therby wenen they to han suffisaunce, honour, power, renoun, and gladnesse. Than is it good, that men seken thus by so many diverse studies. In whiche desyr it may lightly ben shewed how gret is the strengthe of nature; for how so that men han diverse sentences and discordinge, algates men acorden alle in lovinge the ende of good.

Metre II.

Quantas rerum flectat habenas.

It lyketh me to shewe, by subtil song, with slakke and delitable soun of strenges, how that Nature, mighty, enclineth and flitteth the governements of thinges, and by whiche lawes she, purveyable, kepeth the grete world; and how she, bindinge, restreyneth alle thinges by a bonde that may nat ben unbounde. Al be it so that the lyouns of the contre of Pene beren the faire chaynes, and taken metes of the handes of folk that yeven it hem, and dreden hir sturdy maystres of whiche they ben wont to suffren betinges: yif that hir horrible mouthes ben be-bled, *that is to seyn, of bestes devoured*, hir corage of time passed, that hath ben ydel and rested, repeyreth ayein; and they roren grevously and remembren on hir nature, and slaken hir nekkes fram hir chaynes unbounde; and hir mayster, first to-torn with blody tooth, assayeth the wode wrathes of hem: *this is to seyn, they freten hir mayster*. And the iangelinge brid that singeth on the heye braunches, *that is to seyn, in the wode*, and after is enclosed in a streyt cage: al-though that the

pleyinge bisinesse of men yeveth hem honiede drinkes and large metes with swete studie, yit natheles, yif thilke brid, skippinge out of hir streyte cage, seeth the agreables shadewes of the wodes, she defouleth with hir feet hir metes y-shad, and seketh mourninge only the wode; and twitereth, desiringe the wode, with hir swete vois. The yerde of a tree, that is haled adoun by mighte strengthe, boweth redily the crop a-doun: but yif that the hand of him that it bente lat it gon ayein, anon the crop loketh upright to hevene. The sonne Phebus, that falleth at even in the westrene wawes, retorneth ayein eftsones his carte, by privee path, ther-as it is wont aryse. Alle thinges seken ayein to hir propre cours, and alle thinges reioysen hem of hir retorninge ayein to hir nature. Ne non ordinaunce nis bitaken to thinges, but that that hath ioyned the endinge to the beginninge, and hath maked the cours of it-self stable, *that it chaungeth nat from his propre kinde.*

Prose III.

Vos quoque, o terrena animalia.

Certes also ye men, that ben erthe-liche beestes, dremen alwey youre beginninge, al-though it be with a thinne imaginacioun; and by a maner thoughte, al be it nat cleerly ne parfitly, ye loken fram a-fer to thilke verray fyn of blisfulnesse; and ther-fore naturel entencioun ledeth you to thilke verray good, but many maner errours mis-torneth you ther-fro. Consider now yif that by thilke thinges, by whiche a man weneth to geten him blisfulnesse, yif that he may comen to thilke ende that he weneth to come by nature. For yif that moneye or honours, or thise other forseyde thinges bringen to men swich a thing that no good ne fayle hem ne semeth fayle, certes than wole I graunte that they ben maked blisful by thilke thinges that they han geten. But yif so be that thilke thinges ne mowen nat performen that they biheten, and that ther be defaute of manye goodes, sheweth it nat thanne cleerly that fals beautee of blisfulnesse is knowen and ateint in thilke thinges? First and forward thou thy-self, that haddest habundaunces of richesses nat long agon, I axe yif that, in the habundaunce of alle thilke richesses, thou were never anguissous or sory in thy corage of any wrong or grevaunce that bi-tidde thee on any syde?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it ne remembreth me nat that evere I was so free of my thought that I ne was alwey in anguissh of som-what.'

'And was nat that,' quod she, 'for that thee lakked som-what that thou noldest nat han lakked, or elles thou haddest that thou noldest nat han had?'

'Right so is it,' quod I.

'Thanne desiredest thou the presence of that oon and the absence of that other?'

'I graunte wel,' quod I.

'Forsothe,' quod she, 'than nedeth ther som-what that every man desireth?'

'Ye, ther nedeth,' quod I.

'Certes,' quod she, 'and he that hath lakke or nede of aught nis nat in every wey suffisaunt to himself?'

'No,' quod I.

'And thou,' quod she, 'in al the plentee of thy richesses haddest thilke lakke of suffisaunse?'

'What elles?' quod I.

'Thanne may nat richesses maken that a man nis nedy, ne that he be suffisaunt to him-self; and that was it that they bi-highten, as it semeth. And eek certes I trowe, that this be gretly to considere, that moneye ne hath nat in his owne kinde that it ne may ben bi-nomen of hem that han it, maugre hem?'

'I bi-knowe it wel,' quod I.

'Why sholdest thou nat bi-knowen it,' quod she, 'whan every day the strenger folk bi-nemen it fro the febler, maugre hem? For whennes

comen elles alle thise foreyne compleyntes or quereles of pletinges, but for that men axen ayein here moneye that hath ben bi-nomen hem by force or by gyle, and alwey maugre hem?'

'Right so is it,' quod I.

'Than,' quod she, 'hath a man nede to seken him foreyne helpe by whiche he may defende his moneye?'

'Who may sey nay?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod she; 'and him nedede non help, yif he ne hadde no moneye that he mighte lese?'

'That is douteles,' quod I.

'Than is this thinge torned in-to the contrarye,' quod she. 'For richesses, that men wenen sholde make suffisaunce, they maken a man rather han nede of foreyne help! Which is the manere or the gyse,' quod she, 'that richesse may dryve awey nede? Riche folk, may they neither han hunger ne thurst? Thise riche men, may they fele no cold on hir limes on winter? But thou wolt answeren, that riche men han y-now wher-with they may staunchen hir hunger, slaken hir thurst, and don a-wey cold. In this wyse may nede be counforted by richesses; but certes, nede ne may nat al outrely ben don a-wey. For though this nede, that is alwey gapinge and gredy, be fulfild with richesses, and axe any thing, yit dwelleth thanne a nede that mighte be fulfild. I holde me stille, and telle nat how that litel thing suffiseth to nature; but certes to avarice y-nough ne suffiseth no-thing. For sin that richesses ne may nat al don awey nede, but richesses maken nede, what may it thanne be, that ye wenen that richesses mowen yeven you suffisaunce?

Metre III.

Quamvis fluente dives auri gurgite.

Al were it so that a riche coveytous man hadde a river fletinge al of gold, yit sholde it never staunchen his coveitise; and though he hadde his nekke y-charged with precious stones of the rede see, and though he do ere his feldes plentivous with an hundred oxen, never ne shal his bytinge bisinesse for-leten him whyl he liveth, ne the lighte richesses ne sholle nat beren him companye whan he is ded.

Prose IV.

Set dignitates.

But dignitees, to whom they ben comen, maken they him honorable and reverent? Han they nat so gret strengthe, that they may putte vertues in the hertes of folk that usen the lordshipes of hem? Or elles may they don a-wey the vyces? Certes, they ne be nat wont to don awey wikkednesse, but they ben wont rather to shewen wikkednesse. And therof comth it that I have right grete desdeyn, that dignitees ben yeven ofte to wikked men; for which thing Catullus cleped *a consul of Rome, that highte* Nonius, "postum" or "boch"; *as who seyth, he cleped him a congregacioun of vyces in his brest, as a postum is ful of corupcioun*, al were this Nonius set in a chayre of dignitee. Seest thou nat thanne how gret vilenye dignitees don to wikked men? Certes, unworthinesse of wikked men sholde be the lasse y-sene, yif they nere renomed of none honours. Certes, thou thyself ne mightest nat ben brought with as manye perils as thou mightest suffren that thou woldest beren the magistrat with Decorat; *that is to seyn, that for no peril that mighte befallen thee by offence of the king Theodorike, thou noldest nat be felawe in governaunce with Decorat;* whan thou saye that he hadde wikked corage of a likerous shrewe and of an accusor. Ne I ne may nat, for swiche honours, iugen hem worthy of reverence, that I deme and holde unworthy to han thilke same honours. Now yif thou saye a man that were fulfild of wisdom, certes, thou ne mightest nat deme

that he were unworthy to the honour, or elles to the wisdom of which he is fulfild?'—'No,' quod I.—'Certes, dignitees,' quod she, 'apertienen proprely to vertu; and vertu transporteth dignitee anon to thilke man to which she hir-self is conioigned. And for as moche as honours of poeple ne may nat maken folk digne of honour, it is wel seyn cleerly that they ne han no propre beautee of dignitee. And yit men oughten taken more heed in this. For yif it so be that a wikked wight be so mochel the foulere and the more out-cast, that he is despysed of most folk, so as dignitee ne may nat maken shrewes digne of reverence, the which shrewes dignitee sheweth to moche folk, thanne maketh dignitee shrewes rather so moche more despysed than preysed; and forsothe nat unpunisshed: *that is for to seyn, that shrewes revengen hem ayeinward up-on dignitees;* for they yilden ayein to dignitees as gret guerdoun, whan they bi-spotten and defoulen dignitees with hir vilenye. And for as mochel as thou mowe knowe that thilke verray reverence ne may nat comen by thise shadewy transitorie dignitees, undirstond now thus: yif that a man hadde used and had many maner dignitees of consules, and were comen peraventure amonge straunge naciouns, sholde thilke honour maken him worshipful and redouted of straunge folk? Certes, yif that honour of poeple were a natorel yift to dignitees, it ne mighte never cesen nowher amonges no maner folk to don his office, right as fyr in every contree ne stinteth nat to eschaufen and to ben hoot. But for as moche as for to ben holden honourable or reverent ne cometh nat to folk of hir propre strengthe of nature, but only of the false opinioun of folk, *that is to seyn, that wenen that dignitees maken folk digne of honour;* anon therfore whan that they comen theras folk ne knowen nat thilke dignitees, hir honours vanisshen awey, and that anon. But that is amonges straunge folk, mayst thou seyn; but amonges hem ther they weren born, ne duren nat thilke dignitees alwey? Certes, the dignitee of the provostrie of Rome was whylom a gret power; now is it nothing but an ydel name, and the rente of the senatorie a gret charge. And yif a wight whylom hadde the office to taken hede to the vitailes of the poeple, as of corn and other thinges, he was holden amonges grete; but what thing is now more out-cast thanne thilke provostrie? And, as I have seyd a litel her-biforn, that thilke thing that hath no propre beautee of him-self receiveth somtyme prys and shyninge, and somtyme leseth it by the opinioun of usaunces. Now yif that dignitees thanne ne mowen nat maken folk digne of reverence, and yif that dignitees wexen foule of hir wille by the filthe of shrewes, and yif that dignitees lesen hir shyninge by chaunginge of tymes, and yif they wexen foule by estimacioun of poeple: what is it that they han in hem-self of beautee that oughte ben desired? *as who seyth non;* thanne ne mowen they yeven no beautee of dignitee to non other.

METRE IV.

Quamvis se, Tyrio superbus ostro.

Al be it so that the proude Nero, with alle his wode luxurie, kembde him and aparailede him with faire purpres of Tirie, and with whyte perles, algates yit throf he hateful to alle folk: *this is to seyn, that al was he behated of alle folk.* Yit this wikked *Nero hadde gret lordship, and* yaf whylom to the reverents senatours the unworshipful setes of dignitees. *Unworshipful setes he clepeth here, for that Nero, that was so wikked, yaf tho dignitees.* Who-so wolde thanne resonably wenen, that blisfulnesse were in swiche honours as ben yeven by vicious shrewes?

Prose V.

An vero regna regumque familiaritas.

But regnes and familiaritees of kinges, may they maken a man to ben mighty? How elles, whan hir blisfulnesse dureth perpetuely? But certes, the olde age of tyme passed, and eek of present tyme now, is ful of ensaumples how that kinges ben chaunged in-to wrecchednesse out of hir welefulnesse. O! a noble thing and a cleer thing is power, that is nat founden mighty to kepen it-self! And yif that power of reaumes be auctour and maker of blisfulnesse, yif thilke power lakketh on any syde, amenuseth it nat thilke blisfulnesse and bringeth in wrecchednesse? But yit, al be it so that the reaumes of mankinde strecchen brode, yit mot ther nede ben moche folk, over whiche that every king ne hath no lordshipe ne comaundement. And certes, up-on thilke syde that power faileth, which that maketh folk blisful, right on that same syde noun-power entreth under-nethe, that maketh hem wrecches; in this manere thanne moten kinges han more porcioun of wrecchednesse than of welefulnesse. A tyraunt, *that was king of Sisile*, that hadde assayed the peril of his estat, shewede by similitude the dredes of reaumes by gastnesse of a swerd that heng over the heved *of his familier*. What thing is thanne this power, that may nat don awey the bytinges of bisinesse, ne eschewe the prikkes of drede? And certes, yit wolden they liven in sikernesse, but they may nat; and yit they glorifye hem in hir power. Holdest thou thanne that thilke man be mighty, that thou seest that he wolde don that he may nat don? And holdest thou thanne him a mighty man, that hath envirownede his sydes with men of armes or seriaunts, and dredeth more hem that he maketh agast than they dreden him, and that is put in the handes of his servaunts for he sholde seme mighty? But of familieres or servaunts of kinges what sholde I telle thee anything, sin that I myself have shewed thee that reaumes hem-self ben ful of gret feblesse? The whiche familieres, certes, the ryal power of kinges, in hool estat and in estat abated, ful ofte throweth adown. Nero constreynede Senek, his familier and his mayster, to chesen on what deeth he wolde deyen. Antonius comaundede that knightes slowen with hir swerdes Papinian *his familier*, which Papinian hadde ben longe tyme ful mighty amonges hem of the court. And yit, certes, they wolden bothe han renounced hir power; of whiche two Senek enforcede him to yeven to Nero his richesses, and also to han gon in-to solitarie exil. But whan the grete weighte, *that is to seyn, of lordes power or of fortune*, draweth hem that shullen falle, neither of hem ne mighte do that he wolde. What thing is thanne thilke power, that though men han it, yit they ben agast; and whanne thou woldest han it, thou nart nat siker; and yif thou woldest forleten it, thou mayst nat eschuen it? But whether swiche men ben frendes at nede, as ben conseyled by fortune and nat by vertu? Certes, swiche folk as weleful fortune maketh freendes, contrarious fortune maketh hem enemys. And what pestilence is more mighty for to anoye a wight than a familier enemy?

Metre V.

Qui se uolet esse potentem.

Who-so wol be mighty, he mot daunten his cruel corage, ne putte nat his nekke, overcomen, under the foule reynes of lecherye. For al-be-it so that thy lordshipe strecche so fer, that the contree of Inde quaketh at thy comaundements or at thy lawes, and that the last *ile in the see, that hight* Tyle, be thral to thee, yit, yif thou mayst nat putten awey thy foule

derke desyrs, and dryven out fro thee wrecched complaintes, certes, it nis no power that thou hast.

Prose VI.

Gloria uero quam fallax saepe.

But glorie, how deceivable and how foul is it ofte! For which thing nat unskilfully a tragedien, *that is to seyn, a maker of ditees that highten tragedies,* cryde and seide: "O glorie, glorie," quod he, "thou art nothing elles to thousandes of folkes but a greet sweller of eres!" For manye han had ful greet renoun by the false opinioun of the poeple, and what thing may ben thought fouler than swiche preysinge? For thilke folk that ben preysed falsly, they moten nedes han shame of hir preysinges. And yif that folk han geten hem thonk or preysinge by hir desertes, what thing hath thilke prys eched or encresed to the conscience of wyse folk, that mesuren hir good, nat by the rumour of the poeple, but by the soothfastnesse of conscience? And yif it seme a fair thing, a man to han encresed and spred his name, than folweth it that it is demed to ben a foul thing, yif it ne be y-sprad and encresed. But, as I seyde a litel herbiforn that, sin ther mot nedes ben many folk, to whiche folk the renoun of a man ne may nat comen, it befalleth that he, that thou wenest be glorious and renomed, semeth in the nexte partie of the erthes to ben withoute glorie and with-oute renoun.

And certes, amonges thise thinges I ne trowe nat that the prys and grace of the poeple nis neither worthy to ben remembred, ne cometh of wyse Iugement, ne is ferme perdurably. But now, of this name of gentilesse, what man is it that ne may wel seen how veyn and how flittinge a thing it is? For yif the name of gentilesse be referred to renoun and cleernesse of linage, thanne is gentil name but a foreine thing, *that is to seyn, to hem that glorifyen hem of hir linage.* For it semeth that gentilesse be a maner preysinge that comth of the deserte of ancestres. And yif preysinge maketh gentilesse, thanne moten they nedes be gentil that ben preysed. For which thing it folweth, that yif thou ne have no gentilesse of thy-self, *that is to seyn, preyse that comth of thy deserte,* foreine gentilesse ne maketh thee nat gentil. But certes, yif ther be any good in gentilesse, I trowe it be al-only this, that it semeth as that a maner necessitee be imposed to gentil men, for that they ne sholden nat outrayen or forliven fro the virtues of hir noble kinrede.

Metre VI.

Omne hominum genus in terris.

Al the linage of men that ben in erthe ben of semblable birthe. On allone is fader of thinges. On allone ministreth alle thinges. He yaf to the sonne hise bemes; he yaf to the mone hir hornes. He yaf the men to the erthe; he yaf the sterres to the hevene. He encloseth with membres the soules that comen fro his hye sete. Thanne comen alle mortal folk of noble sede; why noisen ye or bosten of youre eldres? For yif thou loke your biginninge, and god your auctor and your maker, thanne nis ther no forlived wight, but-yif he norisshe his corage un-to vyces, and forlete his propre burthe.

Prose VII.

Quid autem de corporis uoluptatibus.

But what shal I seye of delices of body, of whiche delices the desiringes ben ful of anguissh, and the fulfillinges of hem ben ful of penaunce? How greet syknesse and how grete sorwes insufferable, right as a maner fruit of wikkednesse, ben thilke delices wont to bringen to the bodies of folk that usen him! Of whiche delices I not what Ioye may ben had of hir moevinge. But this wot I wel, that whoso-ever wole remembren him of hise

luxures, he shal wel understonde that the issues of delices ben sorwful and sorye. And yif thilke delices mowen maken folk blisful, than by the same cause moten thise bestes ben cleped blisful; of whiche bestes al the entencioun hasteth to fulfille hir bodily lolitee. And the gladnesse of wyf and children were an honest thing, but it hath ben seyd that it is over muchel ayeins kinde, that children han ben founden tormentours to hir fadres, I not how manye : of whiche children how bytinge is every condicioun, it nedeth nat to tellen it thee, that hast or this tyme assayed it, and art yit now anguissous. In this approve I the sentence of my disciple Euripidis, that seyde, that "he that hath no children is weleful by infortune."

Metre VII.

Habet omnis hoc uoluptas.

Every delyt hath this, that it anguissheth hem with prikkes that usen it. It resembleth to thise flyinge flyes that we clepen been, that, after that he hath shad hise agreable honies, he fleeth awey, and stingeth the hertes, of hem that ben y-smite, with bytinge overlonge holdinge.

Prose VIII.

Nihil igitur dubium est.

Now is it no doute thanne that thise weyes ne ben a maner misledinges to blisfulnesse, ne that they ne mowe nat leden folk thider as they biheten to leden hem. But with how grete harmes thise forseyde weyes ben enlaced, I shal shewe thee shortly. For-why yif thou enforcest thee to asemble moneye, thou most bireven him his moneye that hath it. And yif thou wolt shynen with dignitees, thou most bisechen and supplien hem that yeven tho dignitees. And yif thou coveitest by honour to gon biforn other folk, thou shalt defoule thy-self thorugh humblesse of axinge. Yif thou desirest power, thou shalt by awaytes of thy subgits anoyously ben cast under manye periles. Axest thou glorie? Thou shalt ben so destrat by aspre thinges that thou shalt forgoon sikernesse. And yif thou wolt leden thy lyf in delices, every wight shal despisen thee and forleten thee, as thou that art thral to thing that is right foul and brotel; that is to seyn, servaunt to thy body. Now is it thanne wel seen, how litel and how brotel possessioun they coveiten, that putten the goodes of the body aboven hir owne resoun. For mayst thou sormounten thise olifaunts in gretnesse or weight of body? Or mayst thou ben stronger than the bole? Mayst thou ben swifter than the tygre? Bihold the spaces and the stablenesse and the swifte cours of the hevene, and stint som-tyme to wondren on foule thinges; the which hevene, certes, nis nat rather for thise thinges to ben wondred up-on, than for the resoun by which it is governed. But the shyning of thy forme, *that is to seyn, the beautee of thy body*, how swiftly passinge is it, and how transitorie; certes, it is more flittinge than the mutabilitee of flowers of the somersesoun. For so Aristotle telleth, that yif that men hadden eyen of a beest that highte lynx, so that the lokinge of folk mighte percen thorugh the thinges that with-stonden it, who-so loked thanne in the entrailes of the body of Alcibiades, that was ful fayr in the superfice with-oute, it shold seme right foul. And forthy, yif thou semest fayr, thy nature maketh nat that, but the desceivaunce of the feblesse of the eyen that loken. But preyse the goodes of the body as mochel as ever thee list; so that thou knowe algates that, what-so it be, *that is to seyn, of the goodes of thy body*, which that thou wondrest up-on, may ben destroyed or dissolved by the hete of a fevere of three dayes. Of alle whiche forseyde thinges I may reducen this shortly in a somme, that thise worldly goodes, whiche that ne

mowen nat yeven that they biheten, ne ben nat parfit by the congregacioun of alle goodes; that they ne ben nat weyes ne pathes that bringen men to blisfulnesse, ne maken men to ben blisful.

METRE VIII.

Eheu! quae miseros tramite deuios.

Allas! which folye and which ignoraunce misledeth wandringe wrecches fro the path of verray goode!

Certes, ye ne seken no gold in grene trees, ne ye ne gaderen nat precious stones in the vynes, ne ye ne hyden nat your ginnes in the hye mountaignes to cacchen fish of whiche ye may maken riche festes. And yif yow lyketh to hunte to roes, ye ne gon nat to the fordes of the water that highte Tyrene. And over this, men knowen wel the crykes and the cavernes of the see y-hid in the flodes, and knowen eek which water is most plentivous of whyte perles, and knowen which water haboundeth most of rede purpre, *that is to seyn, of a maner shelle-fish with which men dyen purpre;* and knowen which strondes habounden most with tendre fisshes, or of sharpe fisshes that highten echines. But folk suffren hem-self to ben so blinde, that hem ne reccheth nat to knowe where thilke goodes ben y-hid whiche that they coveiten, but ploungen hem in erthe and seken there thilke good that sormounteth the hevene that bereth the sterres. What preyere may I maken that be digne to the nyce thoughtes of men? But I preye that they coveiten richesse and honours, so that, whan they han geten tho false goodes with greet travaile, that ther-by they mowe knowen the verray goodes.

PROSE IX.

Hactenus mendacis formam.

It suffyseth that I have shewed hider-to the forme of false welefulnesse, so that, yif thou loke now cleerly, the order of myn entencioun requireth from hennes-forth to shewen thee the verray welefulnesse.

'For sothe,' quod I, 'I see wel now that suffisaunce may nat comen by richesses, ne power by reames, ne reverence by dignitees, ne gentilesse by glorie, ne Ioye by delices.'

'And hast thou wel knowen the causes,' quod she, 'why it is?'

'Certes, me semeth,' quod I, 'that I see hem right as though it were thorugh a litel clifte; but me were levere knowen hem more openly of thee.'

'Certes,' quod she, 'the resoun is al redy. For thilke thing that simply is o thing, with-outen any devisioun, the errour and folye of mankinde departeth and devydeth it, and misledeth it and transporteth from verray and parfit good to goodes that ben false and unparfit. But sey me this. Wenest thou that he, that hath nede of power, that him ne lakketh no-thing?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'Certes,' quod she, 'thou seyst a-right. For yif so be that ther is a thing, that in any partye be febler of power, certes, as in that, it mot nedes ben nedy of foreine help.'

'Right so is it,' quod I.

'Suffisaunce and power ben thanne of o kinde?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'And demest thou,' quod she, 'that a thing that is of this manere, *that is to seyn, suffisaunt and mighty*, oughte ben despysed, or elles that it be right digne of reverence aboven alle thinges?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it nis no doute, that it is right worthy to ben reverenced.'

'Lat us,' quod she, 'adden thanne reverence to suffisaunce and to power, so that we demen that thise three thinges ben al o thing.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'lat us adden it, yif we wolen graunten the sothe.'

'What demest thou thanne?' quod

she; 'is that a derk thing and nat noble, *that is suffisaunt, reverent, and mighty*, or elles that it is right noble and right cleer by celebritee of renoun? Consider thanne,' quod she, 'as we han graunted her-biforn, that he that ne hath nede of no-thing, and is most mighty and most digne of honour, yif him nedeth any cleernesse of renoun, which cleernesse he might nat graunten of him-self, so that, for lakke of thilke cleernesse, he mighte seme the febeler on any syde or the more out-cast?' Glose. *This is to seyn, nay; for who-so that is suffisaunt, mighty, and reverent, cleernesse of renoun folweth of the forseyde thinges; he hath it al redy of his suffisaunce.*

Boece. 'I may nat,' quod I, 'denye it; but I mot graunte as it is, that this thing be right celebrable by cleernesse of renoun and noblesse.'

'Thanne folweth it,' quod she, 'that we adden cleernesse of renoun to the three forseyde thinges, so that ther ne be amonges hem no difference?'

'This is a consequence,' quod I.

'This thing thanne,' quod she, 'that ne hath nede of no foreine thing, and that may don alle thinges by hise strengthes, and that is noble and honourable, nis nat that a mery thing and a Ioyful?'

'But whennes,' quod I, 'that any sorwe mighte comen to this thing that is swiche, certes, I may nat thinke.'

'Thanne moten we graunte,' quod she, 'that this thing be ful of gladnesse, yif the forseyde thinges ben sothe; and certes, also mote we graunten that suffisaunce, power, noblesse, reverence, and gladnesse ben only dyverse by names, but hir substaunce hath no diversitee.'

'It mot needly been so,' quod I.

'Thilke thing thanne,' quod she, 'that is oon and simple in his nature, the wikkednesse of men departeth it and devydeth it; and whan they enforcen hem to geten partye of a thing that ne hath no part, they ne geten hem neither thilke partye that nis non, ne the thing al hool that they ne desire nat.'

'In which manere?' quod I.

'Thilke man,' quod she, 'that secheth richesses to fleen povertee, he ne travaileth him nat for to gete power; for he hath levere ben derk and vyl; and eek withdraweth from him-self many naturel delyts, for he nolde lese the moneye that he hath assembled. But certes, in this manere he ne geteth him nat suffisaunce that power forleteth, and that molestie prikketh, and that filthe maketh out-cast, and that derkenesse hydeth. And certes, he that desireth only power, he wasteth and scatereth richesse, and despyseth delyts, and eek honour that is with-oute power, ne he ne preyseth glorie no-thing. Certes, thus seest thou wel, that manye thinges faylen to him; for he hath som-tyme defaute of many necessitees, and many anguisshes byten him; and whan he ne may nat don tho defautes a-wey, he forleteth to ben mighty, and that is the thing that he most desireth. And right thus may I maken semblable resouns of honours, and of glorie, and of delyts. For so as every of thise forseyde thinges is the same that thise other thinges ben, *that is to seyn, al oon thing*, who-so that ever seketh to geten that oon of thise, and nat that other, he ne geteth nat that he desireth.'

Boece. 'What seyst thou thanne, yif that a man coveiteth to geten alle thise thinges to-gider?'

Philosophie. 'Certes,' quod she, 'I wolde seye, that he wolde geten him sovereyn blisfulnesse; but that shal he nat finde in tho thinges that I have shewed, that ne mowen nat yeven that they beheten.'

'Certes, no,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod she, 'ne sholden men nat by no wey seken blisfulnesse in swiche thinges as men wene that they ne mowen yeven but o thing senglely of alle that men seken.'

'I graunte wel,' quod I; 'ne no sother thing ne may been sayd.'

'Now hast thou thanne,' quod she, 'the forme and the causes of false welefulnesse. Now torne and fiitte the eyen of thy thought; for ther shalt thou sen anon thilke verray blisfulnesse that I have bihight thee.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it is cleer and open, thogh it were to a blinde man; and that shewedest thou me ful wel a litel her-biforn, whan thou enforcedest thee to shewe me the causes of the false blisfulnesse. For but-yif I be bigyled, thanne is thilke the verray blisfulnesse parfit, that parfitly maketh a man suffisaunt, mighty, honourable, noble, and ful of gladnesse. And, for thou shalt wel knowe that I have wel understonden thise thinges with-in my herte, I knowe wel that thilke blisfulnesse, that may verrayly yeven oon of the forseyde thinges, sin they ben al oon, I knowe, douteles, that thilke thing is the fulle blisfulnesse.'

Philosophie. 'O my norie,' quod she, 'by this opinioun I seye that thou art blisful, yif thou putte this ther-to that I shal seyn.'

'What is that?' quod I.

'Trowest thou that ther be any thing in thise erthely mortal toumbling thinges that may bringen this estat?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'I trowe it naught; and thou hast shewed me wel that over thilke good ther nis no-thing more to ben desired.'

'Thise thinges thanne,' quod she, '*that is to sey, erthely suffisaunce and power and swiche thinges*, either they semen lykenesses of verray good, or elles it semeth that they yeve to mortal folk a maner of goodes that ne ben nat parfit; but thilke good that is verray and parfit, that may they nat yeven.'

'I acorde me wel,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod she, 'for as mochel as thou hast knowen which is thilke verray blisfulnesse, and eek whiche thilke thinges ben that lyen falsly blisfulnesse, *that is to seyn, that by deceite semen verray goodes*, now behoveth thee to knowe whennes and where thou mowe seke thilke verray blisfulnesse.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'that desire I greetly, and have abiden longe tyme to herknen it.'

'But for as moche,' quod she, 'as it lyketh to my disciple Plato, in his book of "in Timeo," that in right litel thinges men sholden bisechen the help of god, what iugest thou that be now to done, so that we may deserve to finde the sete of thilke verray good?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'I deme that we shollen clepen the fader of alle goodes; for with-outen him nis ther no-thing founden a-right.'

'Thou seyst a-right,' quod she; and bigan anon to singen right thus:—

Metre IX.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas.

'O thou fader, creator of hevene and of erthes, that governest this world by perdurable resoun, that comaundest the tymes to gon from sin that age hadde beginninge; thou that dwellest thy-self ay stedefast and stable, and yevest alle othre thinges to ben moeved; ne foreine causes necesseden thee never to compoune werk of floteringe matere, but only the forme of soverein good y-set with-in thee with-oute envye, *that moevede thee freely*. Thou that art alder-fayrest, beringe the faire world in thy thought, formedest this world to the lyknesse semblable of that faire world in thy thought. Thou drawest al thing of thy soverein ensaumpler, and comaundest that this world, parfitliche y-maked, have freely and absolut his parfit parties. Thou bindest the elements by noumbres proporcionables, that the colde thinges mowen acorden with the hote thinges, and the drye thinges with

the moiste thinges; that the fyr, that is purest, ne flee nat over hye, ne that the hevinesse ne drawe nat adoun over-lowe the earthes that ben plounged in the wateres. Thou knittest to-gider the mene sowle of treble kinde, moevinge alle thinges, and devydest it by membres acordinge; and whan it is thus devyded, it hath asembled a moevinge in-to two roundes; it goth to torne ayein to him-self, and envirouneth a ful deep thought, and torneth the hevene by semblable image. Thou by evene-lyke causes enhansest the sowles and the lasse lyves, and, ablinge hem heye by lighte cartes, thou sowest hem in-to hevene and in-to erthe; and whan they ben converted to thee by thy benigne lawe, thou makest hem retorne ayein to thee by ayeinledinge fyr.

O fader, yive thou to the thought to styen up in-to thy streite sete, and graunte him to enviroune the welle of good; and, the lighte y-founde, graunte him to fichen the clere sightes of his corage in thee. And scater thou and to-breke thou the weightes and the cloudes of erthely hevinesse, and shyne thou by thy brightnesse. For thou art cleernesse; thou art peysible reste to debonaire folk; thou thy-self art biginninge, berer, leder, path, and terme; to loke on thee, that is our ende.

Prose X.

Quoniam igitur quae sit imperfecti.

For as moche thanne as thou hast seyn, which is the forme of good that nis nat parfit, and which is the forme of good that is parfit, now trowe I that it were good to shewe in what this perfeccioun of blisfulnesse is set. And in this thing, I trowe that we sholden first enquire for to witen, yif that any swiche maner good as thilke good that thou hast diffinisshed a litel heer-biforn, *that is to seyn, soverein good*, may ben founde in the nature of thinges; for that veyn imaginacioun of thought ne deceyve us nat, and putte us out of the sothfastnesse of thilke thing that is summitted unto us. But it may nat ben deneyed that thilke good ne is, and that it nis right as welle of alle goodes. For al thing that is cleped inparfit is proeved inparfit by the amenusinge of perfeccioun or of thing that is parfit. And ther-of comth it, that in every thing general, yif that men sen any-thing that is inparfit, certes, in thilke general ther mot ben som-thing that is parfit; for yif so be that perfeccioun is don awey, men may nat thinke ne seye fro whennes thilke thing is that is cleped inparfit. For the nature of thinges ne took nat hir beginninge of thinges amenused and inparfit, but it procedeth of thinges that ben al hoole and absolut, and descendeth so doun in-to outterest thinges, and in-to thinges empty and with-outen frut. But, as I have y-shewed a litel her-biforn, that yif ther be a blisfulnesse that be freele and veyn and inparfit, ther may no man doute that ther nis som blisfulnesse that is sad, stedefast, and parfit.'

Boece. 'This is concluded,' quod I, 'fermely and sothfastly.'

Philosophie. 'But considere also,' quod she, 'in wham this blisfulnesse enhabiteth. The comune acordaunce and conceite of the corages of men proeveth and graunteth, that god, prince of alle thinges, is good. For, so as nothing ne may ben thought bettre than god, it may nat ben douted thanne that he, that nothing nis bettre, that he nis good. Certes, resoun sheweth that god is so good, that it proveth by verray force that parfit good is in him. For yif god ne is swich, he ne may nat ben prince of alle thinges; for certes som-thing possessing in it-self parfit good, sholde ben more worthy than god, and it sholde semen that thilke thing were first, and elder than god. For we han shewed apertly that alle thinges that ben parfit ben first or thinges that ben unparfit; and for-thy, for as

moche as that my resoun or my proces ne go nat a-wey with-oute an ende, we owen to graunten that the sover-ein god is right ful of soverein parfit good. And we han establisshed that the soverein good is verray blisfulnesse: thanne mot it nedes be, that verray blisfulnesse is set in soverein god.'

'This take I wel,' quod I, 'ne this ne may nat ben withseid in no manere.'

'But I preye,' quod she, 'see now how thou mayst proeven, holily and with-oute corupcioun, this that I have seyd, that the soverein god is right ful of soverein good.'

'In which manere?' quod I.

'Wenest thou aught,' quod she, 'that this prince of alle thinges have y-take thilke soverein good any-wher out of him-self, of which soverein good men proveth that he is ful, right as thou mightest thinken that god, that hath blisfulnesse in him-self, and thilke blisfulnesse that is in him, weren dyvers in substaunce? For yif thou wene that god have received thilke good out of him-self, thou mayst wene that he that yaf thilke good to god be more worthy than is god. But I am bi-knowen and confesse, and that right dignely, that god is right worthy aboven alle thinges; and, yif so be that this good be in him by nature, but that it is dyvers fro him by weninge resoun, sin we speke of god prince of alle thinges: feigne who-so feigne may, who was he that hath conioigned thise dyverse thinges to-gider? And eek, at the laste, see wel that a thing that is dyvers from any thing, that thilke thing nis nat that same thing fro which it is under-stonden to ben dyvers. Thanne fol-weth it, that thilke thing that by his nature is dyvers fro soverein good, that that thing nis nat soverein good; but certes, that were a felonous cor-sednesse to thinken that of him that nothing nis more worth. For alwey, of alle thinges, the nature of hem ne may nat ben bettre than his bigin-ning; for which I may concluden, by right verray resoun, that thilke that is biginning of alle thinges, thilke same thing is soverein good in his substaunce.'

Boece. 'Thou hast seyd rightfully,' quod I.

Philosophie. 'But we han graunted,' quod she, 'that the soverein good is blisfulnesse.'

'And that is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne, quod she, 'moten we nedes graunten and confessen that thilke same soverein good be god.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'I ne may nat denye ne withstonde the resouns pur-posed; and I see wel that it folweth by strengthe of the premisses.'

'Loke now,' quod she, 'yif this be proved yit more fermely thus: that ther ne mowen nat ben two sover-ein goodes that ben dyverse amonge hem-self. For certes, the goodes that ben dyverse amonges hem-self, that oon nis nat that that other is; thanne ne [may] neither of hem ben parfit, so as either of hem lakketh to other. But that that nis nat parfit, men may seen apertly that it nis nat soverein. The thinges, thanne, that ben sovereinly goode, ne mowen by no wey ben dyverse. But I have wel concluded that blisfulnesse and god ben the soverein good; for whiche it mot nedes ben, that soverein blis-fulnesse is soverein divinitee.'

'Nothing,' quod I, 'nis more sooth-fast than this, ne more ferme by re-soun; ne a more worthy thing than god may nat ben concluded.'

'Up-on thise thinges thanne,' quod she, 'right as thise geometriens, whan they han shewed hir proposiciouns, ben wont to bringen in thinges that they clepen porismes, *or declaracioums of forseide thinges*, right so wole I yeve thee heer as a corollarie, *or a mede of coroune*. For-why, for as moche as by the getinge of blisfulnesse men ben maked blisful, and blisfulnesse is divinitee: thanne is it manifest and open, that by the getinge of divinitee men ben maked blisful. Right as by

the getinge of Iustice [they ben maked iust], and by the getinge of sapience they ben maked wyse: right so, nedes, by the semblable resoun, whan they han geten divinitee, they ben maked goddes. Thanne is every blisful man god; but certes, by nature, ther nis but o god; but, by the participacioun of divinitee, ther ne let ne desturbeth nothing that ther ne ben manye goddes.'

'This is,' quod I, 'a fair thing and a precious, clepe it as thou wolt; be it porisme or corollarie,' *or mede of coroune or declaringes.*

'Certes,' quod she, 'nothing nis fayrer than is the thing that by resoun sholde ben added to thise forseide thinges.'

'What thing?' quod I.

'So,' quod she, 'as it semeth that blisfulnesse conteneth many thinges, it were for to witen whether that alle thise thinges maken or conioignen as a maner body of blisfulnesse, by dyversitee of parties or of membres; or elles, yif that any of alle thilke thinges be swich that it acomplisshe by himself the substaunce of blisfulnesse, so that alle thise othre thinges ben referred and brought to blisfulnesse,' *that is to seyn, as to the cheef of hem.*

'I wolde,' quod I, 'that thou makedest me cleerly to understonde what thou seyst, and that thou recordedest me the forseyde thinges.'

'Have I nat iuged,' quod she, 'that blisfulnesse is good?'

'Yis, forsothe,' quod I; 'and that soverein good.'

'Adde thanne,' quod she, 'thilke good, *that is maked blisfulnesse*, to alle the forseide thinges; for thilke same blisfulnesse that is demed to ben soverein suffisaunce, thilke selve is soverein power, soverein reverence, soverein cleernesse *or noblesse*, and soverein delyt. **Conclusio.** What seyst thou thanne of alle thise thinges, that is to seyn, suffisaunce, power, and this othre thinges; ben they thanne as membres of blisfulnesse, or ben they referred and brought to soverein good, right as alle thinges that ben brought to the chief of hem?'

'I understonde wel;' quod I, 'what thou purposest to seke; but I desire for to herkne that thou shewe it me.'

'Tak now thus the discreciour of this questioun,' quod she. 'Yif alle thise thinges,' quod she, 'weren membres to felicitee, than weren they dyverse that oon from that other; and swich is the nature of parties or of membres, that dyverse membres compounen a body.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it hath wel ben shewed heer-biforn, that alle thise thinges ben alle o thing.'

'Thanne ben they none membres,' quod she; 'for elles it sholde seme that blisfulnesse were conioigned al of on membre allone; but that is a thing that may nat be don.'

'This thing,' quod I, 'nis nat doutous; but I abyde to herknen the remnaunt of thy questioun.'

'This is open and cleer,' quod she, 'that alle othre thinges ben referred and brought to good. For therefore is suffisaunce requered, for it is demed to ben good; and forthy is power requered, for men trowen also that it be good; and this same thing mowen we thinken and conjecten of reverence, and of noblesse, and of delyt. Thanne is soverein good the somme and the cause of al that aughte ben desired; for-why thilke thing that with-holdeth no good in it-self, ne semblaunce of good, it ne may nat wel in no manere be desired ne requered. And the contrarie: for thogh that thinges by hir nature ne ben nat goode, algates, yif men wene that ben goode, yit ben they desired as though that they weren verrayliche goode. And therfor is it that men oughten to wene by right, that bountee be the soverein fyn, and the cause of alle the thinges that ben to requeren. But certes, thilke that is cause for which men requeren any thing, it semeth that thilke same thing be most desired. As thus: yif that a wight wolde ryden for cause of hele, he ne desireth nat so mochel the

moevinge to ryden, as the effect of his hele. Now thanne, sin that alle thinges ben requered for the grace of good, they ne ben nat desired of alle folk more thanne the same good. But we han graunted that blisfulnesse is that thing, for whiche that alle thise othre thinges ben desired; thanne is it thus: that, certes, only blisfulnesse is requered and desired. By whiche thing it sheweth cleerly, that of good and of blisfulnesse is al oon and the same substaunce.'

'I see nat,' quod I, 'wherfore that men mighten discorden in this.'

'And we han shewed that god and verray blisfulnesse is al oo thing.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne mowen we conclude sikerly, that the substaunce of god is set in thilke same good, and in non other place.

Metre X.

Huc omnes pariter uenite capti.

O cometh alle to-gider now, ye that ben y-caught and y-bounde with wikkede cheynes, by the deceivable delyt of erthely thinges enhabitinge in your thought! Heer shal ben the reste of your labours, heer is the havene stable in peysible quiete; this allone is the open refut to wrecches. **Glosa.** *This is to seyn, that ye that ben combred and deceived with worldely affeccioun, cometh now to this soverein good, that is god, that is refut to hem that wolen comen to him.* **Textus.** Alle the thinges that the river Tagus yeveth yow with his goldene gravailes, or elles alle the thinges that the river Hermus yeveth with his rede brinke, or that Indus yeveth, that is next the hote party of the world, that medleth the grene stones with the whyte, ne sholde nat cleeren the lookinge of your thought, but hyden rather your blinde corages with-in hir derknesse. Al that lyketh yow heer, and excyteth and moeveth your thoughtes, the erthe hath norisshed it in hise lowe caves. But the shyninge, by whiche the hevene is governed and whennes he hath his strengthe, that eschueth the derke overthrowinge of the sowle; and who-so may knowen thilke light of blisfulnesse, he shal wel seyn, that the whyte bemes of the sonne ne ben nat cleer.'

Prose XI.

Assentior, inquam.

Boece. 'I assente me,' quod I; 'for alle thise thinges ben strongly bounden with right ferme resouns.'

Philosophie. 'How mochel wilt thou preysen it,' quod she, 'yif that thou knowe what thilke good is?'

'I wol preyse it,' quod I, 'by prys with-outen ende, yif it shal bityde me to knowe also to-gider god that is good.'

'Certes,' quod she, 'that shal I do thee by verray resoun, yif that tho thinges that I have concluded a litel her-biforn dwellen only in hir first graunting.'

'They dwellen graunted to thee,' quod I; *this is to seyn, as who seith: I graunte thy forseide conclusiouns.*

'Have I nat shewed thee,' quod she, 'that the thinges that ben requered of many folkes ne ben nat verray goodes ne parfite, for they ben dyverse that oon fro that othre; and so as ech of hem is lakkinge to other, they ne han no power to bringen a good that is ful and absolut? But thanne at erst ben they verray good, whanne they ben gadered to-gider alle in-to o forme and in-to oon wirkinge, so that thilke thing that is suffisaunce, thilke same be power, and reverence, and noblesse, and mirthe; and forsothe, but-yif alle thise thinges ben alle oon same thing, they ne han nat wherby that they mowen ben put in the noumber of thinges that oughten ben requered or desired.'

'It is shewed,' quod I; 'ne her-of may ther no man douten.'

'The thinges thanne,' quod she, 'that ne ben no goodes whanne they ben dyverse, and whan they begin-

nen to ben alle oon thing thanne ben they goodes, ne comth it hem nat thanne by the getinge of unitee, that they ben maked goodes?'

'So it semeth,' quod I.

'But al thing that is good,' quod she, 'grauntest thou that it be good by the participacioun of good, or no?'

'I graunte it,' quod I.

'Thanne most thou graunten,' quod she, 'by semblable resoun, that oon and good be oo same thing. For of thinges, of whiche that the effect nis nat naturelly diverse, nedes the substance mot be oo same thing.'

'I ne may nat denye that,' quod I.

'Hast thou nat knowen wel,' quod she, 'that al thing that is hath so longe his dwellinge and his substaunce as longe as it is oon; but whan it forleteth to ben oon, it mot nedes dyen and corumpe to-gider?'

'In which manere?' quod I.

'Right as in bestes,' quod she, 'whan the sowle and the body ben conioigned in oon and dwellen to-gider, it is cleped a beest. And whan hir unitee is destroyed by the disseveraunce of that oon from that other, than sheweth it wel that it is a ded thing, and that it nis no lenger no beest. And the body of a wight, whyl it dwelleth in oo forme by conjunccioun of membres, it is wel seyn that it is a figure of man-kinde. And yif the parties of the body ben so devyded and dissevered, *that oon fro that other*, that they destroyen unitee, the body forleteth to ben that it was biforn. And, who-so wolde renne in the same manere by alle thinges, he sholde seen that, without doute, every thing is in his substaunce as longe as it is oon; and whan it forleteth to ben oon, it dyeth and perissheth.'

'Whan I considere,' quod I, 'manye thinges, I see non other.'

'Is ther any-thing thanne,' quod she, 'that, in as moche as it liveth naturelly, that forleteth the talent or appetyt of his beinge, and desireth to come to deeth and to corupcioun?'

'Yif I considere,' quod I, 'the beestes that han any maner nature of wilninge and of nillinge, I nee finde no beest, but-yif it be constreined fro with-oute forth, that forleteth or despyseth the entencioun to liven and to duren, or that wole, his thankes, hasten him to dyen. For every beest travaileth him to deffende and kepe the savacioun of his lyf, and eschueth deeth and destruccioun.

But certes, I doute me of herbes and of trees, *that is to seyn, that I am in a doute of swiche thinges as herbes or trees*, that ne han no felinge sowles, *ne no naturel wirkinges servinge to appetyles as bestes han, whether they han appetyt to dwellen and to duren.*'

'Certes,' quod she, 'ne ther-of thar thee nat doute. Now loke up-on thise herbes and thise trees; they wexen first in swiche places as ben covenable to hem, in whiche places they ne mowen nat sone dyen ne dryen, as longe as hir nature may deffenden hem. For som of hem waxen in feeldes, and som in mountaignes, and othre waxen in mareys, and othre cleven on roches, and somme waxen plentivous in sondes; and yif that any wight enforce him to beren hem in-to othre places, they wexen drye. For nature yeveth to every thing that that is convenient to him, and travaileth that they ne dye nat, as longe as they han power to dwellen and to liven. What woltow seyn of this, that they drawen alle hir norisshinges by hir rotes, right as they hadden hir mouthes y-plounged with-in the erthes, and sheden by hir maryes hir wode and hir bark? And what woltow seyn of this, that thilke thing that is right softe, as the marye is, that is alwey hid in the sete, al within-inne, and that is defended fro without by the stedefastnesse of wode; and that the uttereste bark is put ayeins the destemperaunce of the

hevene, as a defendour mighty to suffren harm? And thus, certes, maystow wel seem how greet is the diligence of nature; for alle thinges renovelen and puplisshen hem with seed y-multiplyed; ne ther nis no man that ne wot wel that they ne ben right as a foundement and edifice, for to duren nat only for a tyme, but right as for to duren perdurably by generacioun. And the thinges eek that men wenen ne haven none sowles, ne desire they nat ech of hem by semblable resoun to kepen that is hirs, *that is to seyn, that is acordinge to hir nature in conservacioun of hir beinge and enduringe?* For wher-for elles bereth lightnesse the flaumbes up, and the weighte presseth the erthe a-doun, but for as moche as thilke places and thilke moevinges ben covenable to everich of hem? And forsothe every thing kepeth thilke that is acordinge and propre to him, right as thinges that ben contraries and enemys corompen hem. And yit the harde thinges, as stones, clyven and holden hir parties to-gider right faste and harde, and deffenden hem in withstondinge that they ne departe nat lightly a-twinne. And the thinges that ben softe and fletinge, as is water and eyr, they departen lightly, and yeven place to hem that breken or devyden hem; but natheles, they retornen sone ayein in-to the same thinges fro whennes they ben arraced. But fyr fleeth and refuseth al devisioun. Ne I ne trete nat heer now of wilful moevinges of the sowle that is knowinge, but of the naturel entencioun of thinges, as thus: right as we swolwe the mete that we receiven and ne thinke nat on it, and as we drawen our breeth in slepinge that we wite it nat whyle we slepen. For certes, in the beestes, the love of hir livinges ne of hir beinges ne comth nat of the wilninges of the sowle, but of the biginninges of nature. For certes, thorugh constreininge causes, wil desireth and embraceth ful ofte tyme the deeth that nature dredeth; *that is to seyn as thus: that a man may ben constreyned so, by som cause, that his wil desireth and taketh the deeth which that nature hateth and dredeth ful sore.* And somtyme we seeth the contrarye, as thus: that the wil of a wight destorbeth and constreyneth that that nature desireth and requereth al-wey, *that is to seyn*, the werk of generacioun, by the whiche generacioun only dwelleth and is sustened the long durabletee of mortal thinges.

And thus this charitee and this love, that every thing hath to himself, ne comth nat of the moevinge of the sowle, but of the entencioun of nature. For the purviaunce of god hath yeven to thinges that ben creat of him this, that is a ful gret cause to liven and to duren; for which they desiren naturelly hir lyf as longe as ever they mowen. For which thou mayst nat drede, by no manere, that alle the thinges that ben anywhere, that they ne requeren naturelly the ferme stablenesse of perdurable dwellinge, and eek the eschuinge of destruccioun.'

Boece. 'Now confesse I wel,' quod I, 'that I see now wel certeinly, with-oute doutes, the thinges that whylom semeden uncertain to me.'

'But,' quod she, 'thilke thing that desireth to be and to dwellen perdurably, he desireth to ben oon; for yif that that oon were destroyed, certes, beinge ne shulde ther non dwellen no wight.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod she, 'desiren alle thinges oon?'

'I assente,' quod I.

'And I have shewed,' quod she, 'that thilke same oon is thilke that is good?'

'Ye, for sothe,' quod I.

'Alle thinges thanne,' quod she, 'requiren good; and thilke good thanne mayst thou descryven right thus: good is thilke thing that every wight desireth.'

'Ther ne may be thought,' quod I, 'no more verray thing. For either alle thinges ben referred and brought to nought, and floteren with-oute governour, despoiled of oon as of hir propre heved; or elles, yif ther be any thing to which that alle thinges tenden and hyen, that thing moste ben the soverein good of alle goodes.'

Thanne seyde she thus: 'O my nory,' quod she, 'I have gret gladnesse of thee; for thou hast ficched in thyn herte the middel soothfastnesse, *that is to seyn*, the prikke; but this thing hath ben descovered to thee, in that thou seydest that thou wistest nat a litel her-biforn.'

'What was that?' quod I.

'That thou ne wistest nat,' quod she, 'which was the ende of thinges; and certes, that is the thing that every wight desireth; and for as mochel as we han gadered and comprehended that good is thilke thing that is desired of alle, thanne moten we nedes confessen, that good is the fyn of alle thinges.

Metre XI.

Quisquis profunda mente uestigat uerum.

Who-so that seketh sooth by a deep thoght, and coveiteth nat to ben deceived by no mis-weyes, lat him rollen and trenden with-inne him-self the light of his inward sighte; and lat him gadere ayein, enclyninge in-to a compas, the longe moevinges *of his thoughtes;* and lat him techen his corage that he hath enclosed and hid in his tresors, al that he compasseth or seketh fro with-oute. And thanne thilke thinge, that the blake cloude of errour whylom hadde y-covered, shal lighten more cleerly thanne Phebus him-self ne shyneth.

Glosa. *Who-so wole seken the deep grounde of sooth in his thought, and wol nat be deceived by false propositiouns that goon amis fro the trouthe, lat him wel examine and rolle with-inne him-self the nature and the propretees of the thing; and lat him yit eftsones examine and rollen his thoughtes by good deliberacioun, or that he deme; and lat him techen his sowle that it hath, by natural principles kindeliche y-hid with-in it-self, alle the trouthe the whiche he imagineth to ben in thinges with-oute. And thanne alle the derknesse of his misknowinge shal seme more evidently to sighte of his understondinge thanne the sonne ne semeth to sighte with-oute-forth.*

For certes the body, bringinge the weighte of foryetinge, ne hath nat chased out of your thoughte al the cleernesse *of your knowinge;* for certeinly the seed of sooth haldeth and clyveth with-in your corage, and it is awaked and excyted by the winde and by the blastes of doctrine. For wherfor elles demen ye of your owne wil the rightes, whan ye ben axed, but-yif so were that the norisshinge *of resoun* ne livede y-plounged in the depthe of your herte? *this is to seyn, how sholden men demen the sooth of any thing that were axed, yif ther nere a rote of soothfastnesse that were y-plounged and hid in naturel principles, the whiche soothfastnesse lived with-in the deepnesse of the thought.* And yif so be that the Muse and the doctrine of Plato singeth sooth, al that every wight lerneth, he ne doth no-thing elles thanne but recordeth, as men recorden thinges that ben foryeten.'

Prose XII.

Tum ego, Platoni, inquam.

Thanne seide I thus: 'I acorde me gretly to Plato, for thou remembrest and recordest me thise thinges yit the secounde tyme; *that is to seyn*, first whan I loste my memorie by the contagious coniunccioun of the body with the sowle; and eftsones afterward, whan I loste it, confounded by the charge and by the burdene of my sorwe.'

And thanne seide she thus: 'yif thou loke,' quod she, 'first the thinges

that thou hast graunted, it ne shal nat ben right fer that thou ne shalt remembren thilke thing that thou seydest that thou nistest nat.'

'What thing?' quod I.

'By whiche governement,' quod she, 'that this world is governed.'

'Me remembreth it wel,' quod I; 'and I confesse wel that I ne wiste it naught. But al-be-it so that I see now from a-fer what thou purposest, algates, I desire yit to herkene it of thee more pleynly.'

'Thou ne wendest nat,' quod she, 'a litel her-biforn, that men sholden doute that this world nis governed by god.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'ne yit ne doute I it naught, ne I nel never wene that it were to doute; *as who seith, but I wot wel that god governeth this world;* and I shal shortly answeren thee by what resouns I am brought to this. This world,' quod I, 'of so manye dyverse and contrarious parties, ne mighte never han ben assembled in o forme, but-yif ther nere oon that conioignede so manye dyverse thinges; and the same dyversitee of hir natures, that so discorden that oon fro that other, moste departen and unioignen the thinges that ben conioigned, yif ther ne were oon that contenede that he hath conioined and y-bounde. Ne the certein ordre of nature ne sholde nat bringe forth so ordenee moevinges, by places, by tymes, by doinges, by spaces, by qualitees, yif ther ne were oon that were ay stedefast dwellinge, that ordeynede and disponede thise dyversitees of moevinges. And thilke thing, what-so-ever it be, by which that alle thinges ben y-maked and y-lad, I clepe him "god"; that is a word that is used to alle folk.'

Thanne seyde she: 'sin thou felest thus thise thinges,' quod she, 'I trowe that I have litel more to done that thou, mighty of welefulnesse, hool and sounde, ne see eftsones thy contree. But lat us loken the thinges that we han purposed her-biforn. Have I nat noumbred and seyd,' quod she, 'that suffisaunce is in blisfulnesse, and we han acorded that god is thilke same blisfulnesse?'

'Yis, forsothe,' quod I.

'And that, to governe this world,' quod she, 'ne shal he never han nede of non help fro with-oute? For elles, yif he hadde nede of any help, he ne sholde nat have no ful suffisaunce?'

'Yis, thus it mot nedes be,' quod I.

'Thanne ordeineth he by him-self al-one alle thinges?' quod she.

'That may nat be deneyed,' quod I.

'And I have shewed that god is the same good?'

'It remembreth me wel,' quod I.

'Thanne ordeineth he alle thinges by thilke good,' quod she; 'sin he, which that we han acorded to be good, governeth alle thinges by himself; and he is as a keye and a stere by which that the edifice of this world is y-kept stable and with-oute coroumpinge.'

'I acorde me greetly,' quod I; 'and I aperceivede a litel her-biforn that thou woldest seye thus; al-be-it so that it were by a thinne suspecioun.'

'I trowe it wel,' quod she; 'for, as I trowe, thou ledest now more ententifly thyne eyen to loken the verray goodes. But natheles the thing that I shal telle thee yit ne sheweth nat lasse to loken.'

'What is that?' quod I.

'So as men trowen,' quod she, 'and that rightfully, that god governeth alle thinges by the keye of his goodnesse, and alle thise same thinges, as I have taught thee, hasten hem by naturel entencioun to comen to good: ther may no man douten that they ne be governed voluntariely, and that they ne converten hem of hir owne wil to the wil of hir ordenour, as they that ben acordinge and enclyninge to hir governour and hir king.'

'It mot nedes be so,' quod I; 'for the reaume ne sholde nat semen blisful yif ther were a yok of misdrawinges in dyverse parties; ne the

savinge of obedient thinges ne sholde nat be.'

'Thanne is ther nothing,' quod she, 'that kepeth his nature, that enforceth him to goon ayein god?'

'No,' quod I.

'And yif that any-thing enforcede him to with-stonde god, mighte it availen at the laste ayeins him, that we han graunted to ben almighty by the right of blisfulnesse?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'al-outrely it ne mighte nat availen him.'

'Thanne is ther no-thing,' quod she, 'that either wole or may withstonden to this soverein good?'

'I trowe nat,' quod I.

'Thanne is thilke the soverein good,' quod she, 'that alle thinges governeth strongly, and ordeyneth hem softely.'

Thanne seyde I thus: 'I delyte me,' quod I, 'nat only in the endes or in the somme of the resouns that thou hast concluded and proeved, but thilke wordes that thou usest delyten me moche more; so, at the laste, fooles that sumtyme renden grete thinges oughten ben ashamed of hem-self;' *that is to seyn, that we fooles that reprehenden wikkedly the thinges that touchen goddes governaunce, we oughten ben ashamed of our-self: as I, that seyde that god refuseth only the werkes of men, and ne entremeteth nat of hem.*'

'Thou hast wel herd,' quod she, 'the fables of the poetes, how the giaunts assaileden the hevene *with the goddes;* but forsothe, the debonair force *of god* deposede hem, as it was worthy; *that is to seyn, destroyede the giaunts, as it was worthy.* But wilt thou that we ioignen to-gider thilke same resouns? For peraventure, of swich coniuncioun may sterten up som fair sparkle of sooth.'

'Do,' quod I, 'as thee liste.'

'Wenest thou,' quod she, 'that god ne be almighty? No man is in doute of it.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'no wight ne douteth it, yif he be in his minde.'

'But he,' quod she, 'that is almighty, ther nis nothing that he ne may?'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'May god don yvel?' quod she.

'Nay, forsothe,' quod I.

'Thanne is yvel nothing,' quod she, 'sin that he ne may nat don yvel that may don alle thinges.'

'Scornest thou me?' quod I; '*or elles pleyest thou or deceivest thou me,* that hast so woven me with thy resouns the hous of Dedalus, so entrelaced that it is unable to be unlaced; thou that other-whyle entrest ther thou issest, and other-whyle issest ther thou entrest, ne foldest thou nat to-gider, *by replicacioun of wordes,* a maner wonderful cercle or enviroininge of the simplicitee devyne? For certes, a litel her-biforn, whan thou bigunne at blisfulnesse, thou seydest that it is soverein good; and seydest that it is set in soverein god; and seydest that god him-self is soverein good; and that god is the fulle blisfulnesse; for which thou yave me as a covenable yift, *that is to seyn,* that no wight nis blisful but-yif he be god also ther-with. And seidest eek, that the forme of good is the substaunce of god and of blisfulnesse; and seidest, that thilke same oon is thilke same good, that is requered and desired of alle the kinde of thinges. And thou proevedest, in disputinge, that god governeth all the thinges of the world by the governements of bountee, *and seydest,* that alle thinges wolen obeyen to him; and *seydest,* that the nature of yvel nis no-thing. And thise thinges ne shewedest thou nat with none resouns y-taken fro with-oute, but by proeves *in cercles and* hoomlich knowen; the whiche proeves drawen to hem-self hir feith and hir acord, everich of hem of other.'

Thanne seyde she thus: 'I ne scorne thee nat, *ne pleye, ne deceive thee;* but I have shewed thee the thing that is grettest over alle thinges by the yift of god, that we whylom preyeden. For this is the forme of

the devyne substaunce, that is swich that it ne slydeth nat in-to outterest foreine thinges, ne ne receiveth no straunge thinges in him; but right as Parmenides seyde *in Greek* of thilke devyne substaunce; he seyde thus: that "thilke devyne substauuce torneth the world and the moevable cercle of thinges, whyl thilke devyne substaunce kepeth it-self with-oute moevinge;" *that is to seyn, that it ne moeveth never-mo, and yit it moeveth alle othre thinges.* But natheles, yif I have stired resouns that ne ben nat taken fro with-oute the compas of thing of which we treten, but resouns that ben bistowed with-in that compas, ther nis nat why that thou sholdest merveilen; sin thou hast lerned by the sentence of Plato, that "nedes the wordes moten be cosines to the thinges of which they speken."

METRE XII.

Felix, qui potuit boni.

Blisful is that man that may seen the clere welle of good; blisful is he that may unbinden him fro the bondes of the hevy erthe. The poete of Trace, *Orpheus*, that whylom hadde right greet sorwe for the deeth of his wyf, after that he hadde maked, by his weeply songes, the wodes, moevable, to rennen; and hadde maked the riveres to stonden stille; and hadde maked the hertes and the hindes to ioignen, dredeles, hir sydes to cruel lyouns, *for to herknen his songe;* and hadde maked that the hare was nat agast of the hounde, which that was plesed by his songe: so, whan the moste ardaunt love of his wif brende the entrailes of his brest, ne the songes that hadden overcomen alle thinges ne mighten nat asswagen hir lord *Orpheus*, he pleynede him of the hevene goddes that weren cruel to him; he wente him to the houses of helle. And there he temprede hise blaundisshinge songes by resowninge strenges, and spak and song in wepinge al that ever he hadde received and laved out of the noble welles of his moder *Calliope* the goddesse; and he song with as mochel as he mighte of wepinge, and with as moche as love, that doublede his sorwe, mighte yeve him and techen him; and he commoevede the helle, and requerede and bisoughte by swete preyere the lordes of sowles in helle, of relesinge; *that is to seyn, to yilden him his wyf.*

Cerberus, the porter of helle, with his three hevedes, was caught and al abayst for the newe song; and the three goddesses, *Furies*, and vengeresses of felonyes, that tormenten and agasten the sowles by anoy, woxen sorwful and sory, and wepen teres for pitee. Tho ne was nat the heved of Ixion y-tormented by the overthrowinge wheel; and Tantalus, that was destroyed by the woodnesse of longe thurst, despyseth the flodes to drinke; the fowl that highte voltor, that eteth the stomak or the giser of Tityus, is so fulfild of his song that it nil eten ne tyren no more. At the laste the lord and Iuge of sowles was moeved to misericordes and cryde, "we ben overcomen," quod he; "yive we to Orpheus his wyf to bere him companye; he hath wel y-bought hir by his song and his ditee; but we wol putte a lawe in this, and covenaunt in the yifte: *that is to seyn*, that, til he be out of helle, yif he loke behinde him, that his wyf shal comen ayein unto us."

But what is he that may yive a lawe to loveres? Love is a gretter lawe and a strenger to him-self *than any lawe that men may yeven.* Allas! whan Orpheus and his wyf weren almest at the termes of the night, *that is to seyn, at the laste boundes of helle*, Orpheus lokede abakward on Eurydice his wyf, and loste hir, and was deed.

This fable aperteineth to yow alle, who-so-ever desireth or seketh to lede his thought in-to the soverein day, *that is to seyn, to cleernesse of soverein good.* For who-so that ever

be so over-comen that he ficche his eyen into the putte of helle, *that is to seyn, who-so sette his thoughtes in erthely thinges*, al that ever he hath drawen of the noble good celestial, he leseth it whan he loketh the helles,' *that is to seyn, in-to lowe thinges of the erthe.*

Explicit Liber tercius.

BOOK IV.

PROSE I.

Hec cum Philosophia, dignitate uultus.

Whan Philosophye hadde songen softely and delitably the forseide thinges, kepinge the dignitee of hir chere and the weighte of hir wordes, I thanne, that ne hadde nat al-outerly foryeten the wepinge and the mourninge that was set in myn herte, forbrak the entencioun of hir that entendede yit to seyn some othre thinges. 'O,' quod I, 'thou that art gyderesse of verrey light; the thinges that thou hast seid me hider-to ben so clere to me and so shewinge by the devyne lookinge of hem, and by thy resouns, that they ne mowen ben overcomen. And thilke thinges that thou toldest me, al-be-it so that I hadde whylom foryeten hem, for the sorwe of the wrong that hath ben don to me, yit natheles they ne weren nat al-outrely unknowen to me. But this same is, namely, a right greet cause of my sorwe, so as the governour of thinges is good, yif that yveles mowen ben by any weyes; or elles yif that yveles passen withoute punisshinge. The whiche thing only, how worthy it is to ben wondred up-on, thou considerest it wel thy-self certeinly. But yit to this thing ther is yit another thing y-ioigned, more to ben wondred up-on. For felonye is emperesse, and floureth *ful of richesses;* and vertu nis nat al-only with-oute medes, but it is cast under and fortroden under the feet of felonous folk; and it abyeth the torments in stede of wikkede felounes. Of alle whiche thinges ther nis no wight that may merveylen y-nough, ne compleine, that swiche thinges ben doon in the regne of gode, that alle thinges woot and alle thinges may, and newole nat but only gode thinges.'

Thanne seyde she thus: 'Certes,' quod she, 'that were a greet merveyle, and an enbasshinge with-outen ende, and wel more horrible than alle monstres, yif it were as thou wenest; *that is to seyn*, that in the right ordenee hous of so mochel a fader and an ordenour of meynee, that the vesseles that ben foule and vyle sholden ben honoured and heried, and the precious vesseles sholden ben defouled and vyle; but it nis nat so. For yif tho thinges that I have concluded a litel herbiforn ben kept hole and unraced, thou shalt wel knowe by the autoritee of god, of the whos regne I speke, that certes the gode folk ben alwey mighty, and shrewes ben alwey out-cast and feble; ne the vyces ne ben never-mo with-oute peyne, ne the vertues ne ben nat with-oute mede; and that blisfulnesses comen alwey to goode folk, and infortune comth alwey to wikked folk. And thou shalt wel knowe many thinges of this kinde, that shollen cesen thy pleintes, and strengthen thee with stedefast sadnesse. And for thou hast seyn the forme of the verray blisfulnesse by me, that have whylom shewed it thee, and thou hast knowen in whom blisfulnesse is y-set, alle thinges y-treted that I trowe ben necessarie to putten forth, I shal shewe thee the wey that shal bringen thee ayein un-to thyn hous. And I shal

ficchen fetheres in thy thought, by whiche it may arysen in heighte, so that, alle tribulacioun y-don awey, thou, by my gydinge and by my path and by my sledes, shalt mowe retorne hool and sound in-to thy contree.

METRE I.

Sunt etenim pennae uolucres mihi.

I have, forsothe, swifte fetheres that surmounten the heighte of hevene. Whan the swifte thought hath clothed it-self in tho fetheres, it despyseth the hateful erthes, and surmounteth the roundnesse of the grete ayr; and it seeth the cloudes behinde his bak; and passeth the heighte of the region of the fyr, that eschaufeth by the swifte moevinge of the firmament, til that he areyseth him in-to the houses that beren the sterres, and ioyneth his weyes with the sonne Phebus, and felawshipeth the wey of the olde colde Saturnus; and he y-maked a knight of the clere sterre; *that is to seyn, that the thought is maked goddes knight by the sekinge of trouthe to comen to the verray knowleche of god.* And thilke thoght renneth by the cercle of the sterres, in alle places ther-as the shyninge night is peinted; *that is to seyn, the night that is cloudeles; for on nightes that ben cloudeles it semeth as the hevene were peinted with dyverse images of sterres.* And whanne he hath y-doon ther y-nough, he shal forleten the laste hevene, and he shal pressen and wenden on the bak of the swifte firmament, and he shal ben maked parfit of the worshipful light *of God.* Ther halt the lord of kinges the ceptre of his might, and atempreth the governements of the world, and the shyninge Iuge of thinges, stable in him-self, governeth the swifte cart or wayn, *that is to seyn, the circuler moevinge of the sonne.* And yif thy wey ledeth thee ayein so that thou be brought thider, thanne wolt thou seye now that that is the contree that thou requerest, of which thou ne haddest no minde: "but now it remembreth me wel, heer was I born, heer wol I fastne my degree, heer wole I dwelle." But yif thee lyketh thanne to loken on the derknesse of the erthe that thou hast forleten, thanne shalt thou seen that thise felonous tyraunts, that the wrecchede peple dredeth, now shollen ben exyled fro thilke fayre contree.'

PROSE II.

Tum ego, Papae, inquam.

Than seyde I thus: 'owh! I wondre me that thou bihetest me so grete thinges; ne I ne doute nat that thou ne mayst wel performe that thou bihetest. But I preye thee only this, that thou ne tarye nat to telle me thilke thinges that thou hast moeved.'

'First,' quod she, 'thou most nedes knowen, that goode folk ben alwey stronge and mighty, and the shrewes ben feble and desert and naked of alle strengthes. And of thise thinges, certes, everich of hem is declared and shewed by other. For so as good and yvel ben two contraries, yif so be that good be stedefast, than sheweth the feblesse of yvel al openly; and yif thou knowe cleerly the frelenesse of yvel, the stedefastnesse of good is knowen. But for as moche as the fey of my sentence shal be the more ferme and haboundaunt, I will gon by that oo wey and by that other; and I wole conferme the thinges that ben purposed, now on this syde and now on that syde. Two thinges ther ben in whiche the effect of alle the dedes of mankinde standeth, that is to seyn, wil and power; and yif that oon of thise two fayleth, ther nis nothing that may be don. For yif that wil lakketh, ther nis no wight that undertaketh to don that he wol nat don; and yif power fayleth, the wil nis but in ydel and stant for naught. And ther-of cometh it, that yif thou see a wight that wolde geten that he may nat geten, thou mayst

nat douten that power ne fayleth him to haven that he wolde.'

'This is open and cleer,' quod I; 'ne it may nat ben deneyed in no manere.'

'And yif thou see a wight,' quod she, 'that hath doon that he wolde doon, thou nilt nat douten that he ne hath had power to don it?'

'No,' quod I.

'And in that that every wight may, in that men may holden him mighty; *as who seyth, in so moche as man is mighty to don a thing, in so mochel men halt him mighty;* and in that that he ne may, in that men demen him to be feble.'

'I confesse it wel,' quod I.

'Remembreth thee,' quod she, 'that I have gadered and shewed by forseyde resouns that al the entencioun of the wil of mankinde, which that is lad by dyverse studies, hasteth to comen to blisfulnesse?'

'It remembreth me wel,' quod I, 'that it hath ben shewed.'

'And recordeth thee nat thanne,' quod she, 'that blisfulnesse is thilke same good that men requeren; so that, whan that blisfulnesse is requered of alle, that good also is requered and desired of alle?'

'It ne recordeth me nat,' quod I; 'for I have it gretly alwey ficched in my memorie.'

'Alle folk thanne,' quod she, 'goode and eek badde, enforcen hem with-oute difference of entencioun to comen to good?'

'This is a verray consequence,' quod I.

'And certein is,' quod she, 'that by the getinge of good ben men y-maked goode?'

'This is certein,' quod I.

'Thanne geten goode men that they desiren?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'But wikkede folk,' quod she, 'yif they geten the good that they desiren, they ne mowe nat be wikkede?'

'So is it,' quod I.

'Thanne, so as that oon and that other,' quod she, 'desiren good; and the goode folk geten good, and nat the wikke folk; thanne nis it no doute that the goode folk ne ben mighty and the wikkede folk ben feble?'

'Who-so that ever,' quod I, 'douteth of this, he ne may nat considere the nature of thinges ne the consequence of resouns.'

And over this quod she, 'yif that ther be two thinges that han oo same purpose by kinde, and that oon of hem pursueth and parformeth thilke same thing by naturel office, and that other ne may nat doon thilke naturel office, but folweth, by other manere thanne is convenable to nature, him that acomplissheth his purpos kindely, and yet he ne acomplissheth nat his owne purpos: whether of thise two demestow for more mighty?'

'Yif that I coniecte,' quod I, 'that thou wolt seye, algates yit I desire to herkne it more pleynly of thee.'

'Thou wilt nat thanne deneye,' quod she, 'that the moevement of goinge nis in men by kinde?'

'No, forsothe,' quod I.

'Ne thou ne doutest nat,' quod she, 'that thilke naturel office of goinge ne be the office of feet?'

'I ne doute it nat,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod she, 'yif that a wight be mighty to moeve and goth upon his feet, and another, to whom thilke naturel office of feet lakketh, enforceth him to gon crepinge up-on his handes: whiche of thise two oughte to ben holden the more mighty by right?'

'Knit forth the remenaunt,' quod I; 'for no wight ne douteth that he that may gon by naturel office of feet ne be more mighty than he that ne may nat.'

'But the soverein good,' quod she, 'that is eveneliche purposed to the gode folk and to badde, the gode folk seken it by naturel office of vertues, and the shrewes enforcen hem to geten it by dyverse coveityse *of erthely thinges*, which that nis no naturel office to geten thilke same soverein

good. Trowestow that it may be any other wyse?'

'Nay,' quod I; 'for the consequence is open and shewinge of thinges that I have graunted; that nedes gode folk moten ben mighty, and shrewes feeble and unmighty.'

'Thou rennest a-right biforn me,' quod she, 'and this is the lugement; *that is to seyn, I iuge of thee* right as thise leches ben wont to hopen *of syke folk, whan they aperceyven* that nature is redressed and withstondeth to the maladye. But, for I see thee now al redy to the understondinge, I shal shewe thee more thikke and continuel resouns. For loke now how greetly sheweth the feblesse and infirmitee of wikkede folk, that ne mowen nat comen to that hir naturel entencioun ledeth hem, and yit almost thilke naturel entencioun constreineth hem. And what *were to demen thanne of shrewes*, yif thilke naturel help hadde forleten hem, the which *naturel help of intencioun* goth awey biforn hem, and is so greet that unnethe it may ben overcome? Consider thanne how greet defaute of power and how greet feblesse ther is in wikkede felonous folk; *as who seyth, the gretter thing that is coveited and the desire nat acomplisshed, of the lasse might is he that coveiteth it and may nat acomplisshe. And forthy Philosophie seyth thus by soverein good:* Ne shrewes ne requeren nat lighte medes ne veyne games, whiche they ne may folwen ne holden; but they failen of thilke somme and of the heighte of thinges, *that is to seyn, soverein good;* ne thise wrecches ne comen nat to the effect *of soverein good*, the which they enforcen hem only to geten, by nightes and by dayes; in the getinge of which good the strengthe of good folk is ful wel y-sene. For right so as thou mightest demen him mighty of goinge, that gooth on his feet til he mighte come to thilke place, fro the whiche place ther ne laye no wey forther to ben gon; right so most thou nedes demen him for right mighty, that geteth and ateyneth to the ende of alle thinges that ben to desire, biyonde the whiche ende ther nis nothing to desire. Of the which *power of good folk* men may conclude, that the wikked men semen to be bareine and naked of alle strengthe. For-why forleten they vertues and folwen vyces? Nis it nat for that they ne knowen nat the goodes? But what thing is more feble and more caitif thanne is the blindnesse of ignoraunce? Or elles they knowen ful wel whiche thinges that they oughten folwe, but lecherye and coveityse overthroweth hem mistorned; and certes, so doth distemperaunce to feble men, that ne mowen nat wrastlen ayeins the vyces. Ne knowen they nat thanne wel that they forleten the good wilfully, and tornen hem wilfully to vyces? And in this wyse they ne forleten nat only to ben mighty, but they forleten aloutrely in any wyse for to ben. For they that forleten the comune fyn of alle thinges that ben, they forleten also ther-with-al for to ben.

And per-aventure it sholde semen to som folk that this were a merveile to seyen: that shrewes, whiche that contienen the more partye of men, ne ben nat ne han no beinge; but natheles, it is so, and thus stant this thing. For they that ben shrewes, I deneye nat that they ben shrewes; but I deneye, and seye simplely and pleinly, that they ne ben nat, ne han no beinge. For right as thou mightest seyen of the carayne of a man, that it were a deed man, but thou ne mightest nat simplely callen it a man; so graunte I wel forsothe, that vicious folk ben wikked, but I ne may nat graunten absolutly and simplely that they ben. For thilke thing that with-holdeth ordre and kepeth nature, thilke thing is and hath beinge; but what thing that faileth of that, *that is to seyn, that he forleteth naturel ordre*, he forleteth thilke thing that is set in his nature. But thou wolt seyn, that shrewes mowen. Certes, that ne de-

neye I nat; but certes, hir power ne descendeth nat of strengthe, but of feblesse. For they mowen don wikkednesses; the whiche they ne mighte nat don, yif they mighten dwellen in the forme and in the doinge of good folk. And thilke power sheweth ful evidently that they ne mowen right naught. For so as I have gadered and proeved a litel her-biforn, that yvel is naught; and so as shrewes mowen only but shrewednesses, this conclusioun is al cleer, that shrewes ne mowen right naught, ne han no power.

And for as moche as thou understonde which is the strengthe of this power of shrewes, I have definisshed a litel her-biforn, that nothing is so mighty as soverein good.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'And thilke same soverein good may don non yvel?'

'Certes, no,' quod I.

'Is ther any wight thanne,' quod she, 'that weneth that men mowen doon alle thinges?'

'No man,' quod I, 'but-yif he be out of his witte.'

'But, certes, shrewes mowen don yvel,' quod she.

'Ye, wolde god,' quod I, 'that they mighten don non!'

'Thanne,' quod she, 'so as he that is mighty to doon only but goode thinges may don alle thinges; and they that ben mighty to don yvele thinges ne mowen nat alle thinges: thanne is it open thing and manifest, that they that mowen don yvel ben of lasse power. And yit, *to proeve this conclusioun*, ther helpeth me this, that I have y-shewed her-biforn, that alle power is to be noumbred among thinges that men oughten requere. And I have shewed that alle thinges, that oughten ben desired, ben referred to good, right as to a maner heighte of hir nature. But for to mowen don yvel and felonye ne may nat ben referred to good. Thanne nis nat yvel of the noumbir of thinges that oughte ben desired. But alle power oughte ben desired and requered. Than is it open and cleer that the power ne the mowinge of shrewes nis no power; and of alle thise thinges it sheweth wel, that the goode folke ben certeinly mighty, and the shrewes douteles ben unmighty. And it is cleer and open that thilke opinioun of Plato is verray and sooth, that seith, that only wyse men may doon that they desiren; and shrewes mowen haunten that hem lyketh, but that they desiren, *that is to seyn, to comen to sovereign good*, they ne han no power to acomplisshen that. For shrewes don that hem list, whan, by tho thinges in which they delyten, they wenen to ateine to thilke good that they desiren; but they ne geten ne ateinen nat ther-to, for vyces ne comen nat to blisfulnesse.

METRE II.

Quos uides sedere celsos.

Who-so that the covertoures of hir veyne aparailes mighte strepen of thise proude kinges, that thou seest sitten on heigh in hir chaires glitteringe in shyninge purpre, envirouned with sorwful armures, manasinge with cruel mouth, blowinge by woodnesse of herte, he shulde seen thanne that thilke lordes beren with-inne hir corages ful streite cheines. For lecherye tormenteth hem in that oon syde with gredy venims; and troublable ire, that araiseth in him the flodes *of troublinges*, tormenteth up-on that other syde hir thought; or sorwe halt hem wery and y-caught; or slydinge and deceivinge hope tormenteth hem. And therfore, sen thou seest oon heed, *that is to seyn, oon tyraunt*, beren so manye tyrannyes, thanne ne doth thilke tyraunt nat that he desireth, sin he is cast doun with so manye wikkede lordes; *that is to seyn, with so manye vyces, that han so wikkedly lordshipes over him.*

Prose III.

Videsne igitur quanto in coeno.

Seestow nat thanne in how grete filthe thise shrewes ben y-wrapped, and with which cleernesse thise good folk shynen? In this sheweth it wel, that to goode folk ne lakketh nevermo hir medes, ne shrewes lakken never-mo torments. For of alle thinges that ben y-doon, thilke thing, for which any-thing is don, it semeth as by right that thilke thing be the mede of that; as thus: yif a man renneth in the stadie, *or in the forlong*, for the corone, thanne lyth the mede in the corone for which he renneth. And I have shewed that blisfulnesse is thilke same good for which that alle thinges ben doon. Thanne is thilke same good purposed to the workes of mankinde right as a comune mede; which mede ne may ben dissevered fro good folk. For no wight as by right, fro thennes-forth that him lakketh goodnesse, ne shal ben cleped good. For which thing, folke of goode maneres, hir medes ne forsaken hem never-mo. For albe-it so that shrewes wexen as wode as hem list *ayeins goode folk*, yit never-the-lesse the corone of wyse men shal nat fallen ne faden. For foreine shrewednesse ne binimeth nat fro the corages of goode folk hir propre honour. But yif that any wight reioyse him of goodnesse that he hadde take fro with-oute (*as who seith, yif that any wight hadde his goodnesse of any other man than of him-self*), certes, he that yaf him thilke goodnesse, or elles som other wight, mighte binime it him. But for as moche as to every wight bis owne propre bountee yeveth him his mede, thanne at erst shal be failen of mede whan he forleteth to ben good. And at the laste, so as alle medes ben requered for men wenen that they ben goode, who is he that wolde deme, that he that is right mighty of good were part-les of mede? And of what mede shal he be guerdoned? Certes, of right faire mede and right grete aboven all medes. Remembre thee of thilke noble corolarie that I yaf thee a litel her-biforn; and gader it to-gider in this manere: — so as good him-self is blisfulnesse, thanne is it cleer and certein, that alle good folk ben maked blisful for they ben goode; and thilke folk that ben blisful, it acordeth and is covenable to ben goddes." Thanne is the mede of goode folk swich that no day shal enpeiren it, ne no wikkednesse ne shal derken it, ne power of no wight ne shal nat amenusen it, *that is to seyn*, to ben maked goddes.

And sin it is thus, *that goode men ne failen never-mo of hir mede*, certes, no wys man ne may doute of undepartable peyne of the shrewes; *that is to seyn, that the peyne of shrewes ne departeth nat from hemself never-mo*. For so as goode and yvel, and peyne and medes ben contrarye, it mot nedes ben, that right as we seen bityden in guerdoun of goode, that also mot the peyne of yvel answery, by the contrarye party, to shrewes. Now thanne, so as bountee and prowesse ben the mede to goode folk, al-so is shrewednesse it-self torment to shrewes. Thanne, who-so that ever is entecched and defouled with peyne, he ne douteth nat, that he is entecched and defouled with yvel. Yif shrewes thanne wolen preysen hem-self, may it semen to hem that they ben with-outen party of torment, sin they ben swiche that the uttereste wikkednesse (*that is to seyn, wikkede thewes, which that is the uttereste and the worste kinde of shrewednesse*) ne defouleth ne entecheth nat hem only, but infecteth and envenimeth hem gretly? And also look on shrewes, that ben the contrarie party of goode men, how greet peyne felawshipeth and folweth hem! For thou hast lerned a litel her-biforn, that al thing that is and hath beinge is oon, and thilke same oon is good; thanne is this the consequence, that is semeth wel, that al

that is and hath beinge is good; *this is to seyn, as who seyth, that beinge and unitee and goodnesse is al oon.* And in this manere it folweth thanne, that al thing that faileth to ben good, it stinteth for to be and for to han any beinge; wherfore it is, that shrewes stinten for to ben that they weren. But thilke other forme of mankinde, that is to seyn, the forme of the body with-oute, sheweth yit that thise shrewes weren whylom men; wher-for, whan they ben perverted and torned in-to malice, certes, than han they forlorn the nature of mankinde. But so as only bountee and prowesse may enhaunsen every man over other men; thanne mot it nedes be that shrewes, which that shrewednesse hath cast out of the condicioun of mankinde, ben put under the merite and the desert of men. Thanne bitydeth it, that yif thou seest a wight that be transformed into vyces, thou ne mayst nat wene that he be a man.

For yif he be ardaunt in avaryce, and that he be a ravinour by violence of foreine richesse, thou shalt seyn that he is lyke to the wolf. And yif he be felonous and with-oute reste, and exercyse his tonge to chydinges, thou shalt lykne him to the hound. And yif he be a prevey awaitour y-hid, and reioyseth him to ravisshe by wyles, thou shalt seyn him lyke to the fox-whelpes. And yif he be distempre and quaketh for ire, men shal wene that he bereth the corage of a lyoun. And yif he be dredful and fleinge, and dredeth thinges that ne oughten nat to ben dred, men shal holden him lyk to the hert. And yif he be slow and astoned and lache, he liveth as an asse. And yif he be light and unstedefast of corage, and chaungeth ay his studies, he is lykned to briddes. And if he be plounged in foule and unclene luxuries, he is with-holden in the foule delyces of the foule sowe. Thanne folweth it, that he that forleteth bountee and prowesse, he forleteth to ben a man; sin he may nat passen in-to the condicioun of god, he is torned in-to a beest.

METRE III.

Vela Neritii dulcis.

Eurus *the wind* aryvede the sailes of *Ulixes*, duk of the contree of Narice, and his wandringe shippes by the see, in-to the ile ther-as *Circes*, the faire goddesse, doughter of the sonne, dwelleth; that medleth to hir newe gestes drinkes that ben touched and maked with enchauntements. And after that hir hand, mighty over the herbes, hadde chaunged hir gestes in-to dyverse maneres; that oon of hem, is covered his face with forme of a boor; that other is chaunged in-to a lyoun of the contree of Marmorike, and his nayles and his teeth wexen; that other of hem is newe-liche chaunged in-to a wolf, and howleth whan he wolde wepe; that other goth debonairely in the hous as a tygre of Inde.

But al-be-it so that the godhed of *Mercurie, that is cleped* the brid of Arcadie, hath had mercy of the duke *Ulixes*, biseged with dyverse yveles, and hath unbounden him fro the pestilence of his ostesse, algates the roweres and the marineres hadden by this y-drawen in-to hir mouthes and dronken the wikkede drinkes. They that weren woxen swyn hadden by this y-chaunged hir mete of breed, for to eten akornes of okes. Non of hir limes ne dwelleth with hem hole, but they han lost the voice and the body; only hir thought dwelleth with hem stable, that wepeth and biweileth the monstruous chaunginge that they suffren. O overlight hand (*as who seyth, O! feble and light is the hand of Circes the enchaunteresse, that chaungeth the bodyes of folkes in-to bestes, to regard and to comparisoun of mutacioun that is maked by vyces*); ne the herbes *of Circes* ne ben nat mighty. For al-be-it so that they may chaungen the limes of the body, algates yit they may nat chaunge

the hertes; for with-inne is y-hid the strengthe and vigor of men, in the secree tour *of hir hertes; that is to seyn, the strengthe of resoun.* But thilke venims *of vyces* to-drawen a man to hem more mightily *than the venim of Circes;* for vyces ben so cruel that they percen and thoroughpassen the corage with-inne; and, thogh they ne anoye nat the body, yit vyces wooden *to destroye men* by wounde of thought.'

Prose IV.

Tum ego, Fateor, inquam.

Than seyde I thus: 'I confesse and am a-knowe it,' quod I; 'ne I ne see nat that men may sayn, as by right, that shrewes ne ben chaunged in-to bestes by the qualitee of hir soules, al-be-it so that they kepen yit the forme of the body of mankinde. But I nolde nat of shrewes, of which the thought cruel woodeth al-wey in-to destruccioun of goode men, that it were leveful to hem to don that.'

'Certes,' quod she, 'ne is nis nat leveful to hem, as I shal wel shewe thee in covenable place; but natheles, yif so were that thilke that men wenen be leveful to shrewes were binomen hem, *so that they ne mighte nat anoyen or doon harm to goode men*, certes, a greet partye of the peyne to shrewes sholde ben allegged and releved. For al-be-it so that this ne seme nat credible thing, per-aventure, to some folk, yit moot it nedes be, that shrewes ben more wrecches and unsely whan they may doon and performe that they coveiten, than yif they mighte nat complisshen that they coveiten. For yif so be that it be wrecchednesse to wilne to don yvel, than is more wrecchednesse to mowen don yvel; without whiche mowinge the wrecched wil sholde languisshe with-oute effect. Than, sin that everiche of thise thinges hath his wrecchednesse, *that is to seyn, wil to don yvel and mowinge to don yvel*, it moot nedes be that they ben constreyned by three unselinesses, that wolen and mowen and performen felonyes and shrewednesses.'

'I acorde me,' quod I; 'but I desire gretly that shrewes losten sone thilke unselinesse, *that is to seyn*, that shrewes weren despoyled of mowinge to don yvel.'

'So shullen they,' quod she, 'soner, per-aventure, than thou woldest; or soner than they hem-self wene to lakken *mowinge to don yvel.* For ther nis no-thing so late in so shorte boundes of this lyf, that is long to abyde, nameliche, to a corage immortel; of whiche shrewes the grete hope, and the hye compassinges of shrewednesses, is ofte destroyed by a sodeyn ende, or they ben war; and that thing estableth to shrewes the ende of hir shrewednesse. For yif that shrewednesse maketh wrecches, than mot he nedes ben most wrecched that lengest is a shrewe; the whiche wikked shrewes wolde I demen aldermost unsely and caitifs, yif that hir shrewednesse ne were finisshed, at the leste wey, by the outtereste deeth. For yif I have concluded sooth of the unselinesse of shrewednesse, than sheweth it cleerly that thilke wrecchednesse is with-outen ende, the whiche is certein to ben perdurable.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'this conclusioun is hard and wonderful to graunte; but I knowe wel that it acordeth moche to the thinges that I have graunted her-biforn.'

'Thou hast,' quod she, 'the right estimacioun of this; but who-so-ever wene that it be a hard thing to acorde him to a conclusioun, it is right that he shewe that some of the premisses ben false; or elles he moot shewe that the collacioun of proposicioums nis nat speedful to a necessarie conclusioun. And yif it be nat so, but that the premisses ben y-graunted, ther is not why he sholde blame the argument.

For this thing that I shal telle thee now ne shal nat seme lasse wonderful; but of the thinges that ben taken also it is necessarie;' *as who*

seyth, it folweth of that which that is purposed biforn.

'What is that?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod she, 'that is, that thise wikked shrewes ben more blisful, *or elles lasse wrecches*, that abyen the torments that they han deserved, than yif no peyne of Iustice ne chastysede hem. Ne this ne seye I nat now, for that any man mighte thenke, that the maners of shrewes ben coriged and chastysed by veniaunce, and that they ben brought to the right wey by the drede of the torment, ne for that they yeven to other folk ensaumple to fleen fro vyces; but I understande yit in another manere, that shrewes ben more unsely whan they ne ben nat punisshed, albe-it so that ther ne be had no resoun or lawe of correccioun, ne non ensaumple of lokinge.'

'And what manere shal that ben,' quod I, 'other than hath be told herbiforn?'

'Have we nat thanne graunted,' quod she, 'that goode folk ben blisful, and shrewes ben wrecches?'

'Yis,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod she, 'yif that any good were added to the wrecchednesse of any wight, nis he nat more weleful than he that ne hath no medlinge of good in his solitarie wrecchednesse?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'And what seystow thanne,' quod she, 'of thilke wrecche that lakketh alle goodes, *so that no good nis medled in his wrecchednesse*, and yit, over al his wikkednesse for which he is a wrecche, that ther be yit another yvel anexed and knit to him, shal nat men demen him more unsely than thilke wrecche of whiche the unselinesse is releved by the participacioun of som good?'

'Why sholde he nat?' quod I.

'Thanne, certes,' quod she, 'han shrewes, whan they ben punisshed, som-what of good anexed to hir wrecchednesse, that is to seyn, the same peyne that they suffren, which that is good by the resoun of Iustice; and whan thilke same shrewes ascapen with-oute torment, than han they som-what more of yvel yit over the wikkednesse that they han don, *that is to seyn*, defaute of peyne; which defaute of peyne, thou hast graunted, is yvel for the deserte of felonye.' 'I ne may nat denye it,' quod I. 'Moche more thanne,' quod she, 'ben shrewes unsely, whan they ben wrongfully delivered fro peyne, than whan they ben punisshed by rightful veniaunce. But this is open thing and cleer, that it is right that shrewes ben punisshed, and it is wikkednesse and wrong that they escapen unpunisshed.'

'Who mighte deneye that?' quod I.

'But,' quod she, 'may any man denye that al that is right nis good; and also the contrarie, that al that is wrong is wikke?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'these thinges ben clere y-nough; and that we han concluded a litel her-biforn. But I praye thee that thou telle me, yif thou acordest to leten no torment to sowles, after that the body is ended by the deeth;' *this is to seyn, understandestow aught that sowles han any torment after the deeth of the body?*

'Certes,' quod she, 'ye; and that right greet; of which sowles,' quod she, 'I trowe that some ben tormented by asprenesse of peyne; and some sowles, I trowe, ben exercised by a purginge mekenesse. But my conseil nis nat to determinye of thise peynes. But I have travailed and told yit hiderto, for thou sholdest knowe that the mowinge of shrewes, which mowinge thee semeth to ben unworthy, nis no mowinge: and eek of shrewes, of which thou pleinedest that they ne were nat punisshed, that thou woldest seen that they ne weren never-mo with-outen the torments of hir wikkednesse: and of the licence *of the mowinge to don yvel*, that thou preydest that it mighte sone be ended, and that thou woldest fayn lernen that it ne sholde nat longe

dure: and that shrewes ben more unsely yif they were of lenger durinqe, and most unsely yif they weren perdurable. And after this, I have shewed thee that more unsely ben shrewes, whan they escapen withoute hir rightful peyne, than whan they ben punisshed by rightful vengeaunce. And of this sentence folweth it, that thanne ben shrewes constreined at the laste with most grevous torment, whan men wene that they ne be nat punisshed.'

'Whan I consider thy resouns,' quod I, 'I ne trowe nat that men seyn any-thing more verayly. And yif I torne ayein to the studies of men, who is he to whom it sholde seme that he ne sholde nat only leven thise thinges, but eek gladly herkne hem?'

'Certes,' quod she, 'so it is; but men may nat. For they han hir eyen so wont to the derknesse *of erthely thinges*, that they ne may nat liften hem up to the light of cleer sothfastnesse; but they ben lyke to briddes, of which the night lightneth hir lokinge, and the day blindeth hem. For whan men loken nat the ordre of thinges, but hir lustes and talents, they wene that either the leve or the mowinge to don wikkednesse, or elles the scapinge with-oute peyne, be weleful. But consider the Iugement of the perdurable lawe. For yif thou conferme thy corage to the beste thinges, thou ne hast no nede of no Iuge to yeven thee prys or mede; for thou hast ioyned thy-self to the most excellent thing. And yif thou have enclyned thy studies to the wikked thinges, ne seek no foreyne wreker out of thy-self; for thou thy-self hast thrist thy-self in-to wikke thinges: right as thou mightest loken by dyverse tymes the foule erthe and the hevene, and that alle other thinges stinten fro with-oute, *so that thou nere neither in hevene ne in erthe, ne saye no-thing more*; than it sholde semen to thee, as by only resoun of lokinge, that thou were now in the sterres and now in the erthe. But the poeple ne loketh nat on thise thinges. What thanne? Shal we thanne aprochen us to hem that I have shewed that they ben lyk to bestes? And what woltow seyn of this: yif that a man hadde al forlorn his sighte and hadde foryeten that he ever saugh, and wende that no-thing ne faylede him of perfeccioun of mankinde, now we that mighten seen the same thinges, wolde we nat wene that he were blinde? Ne also ne acordeth nat the poeple to that I shal seyn, the which thing is sustened by a stronge foundement of resouns, *that is to seyn*, that more unsely ben they that don wrong to othre folk than they that the wrong suffren.'

'I wolde heren thilke same resouns,' quod I.

'Denyestow,' quod she, 'that alle shrewes ne ben worthy to han torment?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'But,' quod she, 'I am certein, by many resouns, that shrewes ben unsely.'

'It acordeth,' quod I.

'Thanne ne doutestow nat,' quod she, 'that thilke folk that ben worthy of torment, that they ne ben wrecches?'

'It acordeth wel,' quod I.

'Yif thou were thanne,' quod she, 'y-set a Iuge or a knower of thinges, whether, trowestow, that men sholden tormenten him that hath don the wrong, or elles him that hath suffred the wrong?'

'I ne doute nat,' quod I, 'that I nolde don suffisaunt satisfaccioun to him that hadde suffred the wrong by the sorwe of him that hadde don the wrong.'

'Thanne semeth it,' quod she, 'that the doere of wrong is more wrecche than he that suffred wrong?'

'That folweth wel,' quod I.

'Than,' quod she, 'by these causes and by othre causes that ben enforced by the same rote, filthe or sinne, by the propre nature of it, maketh men

wrecches; and it sheweth wel, that the wrong that men don nis nat the wrecchednesse of him that receyveth the wrong, but the wrecchednesse of him that doth the wrong. But certes,' quod she, 'thise oratours or advocats don al the contrarye; for they enforcen hem to commoeve the Iuges to han pitee of hem that han suffred and receyved the thinges that ben grevous and aspre, and yit men sholden more rightfully han pitee of hem that don the grevaunces and the wronges; the whiche shrewes, it were a more covenable thing, that the accusours or advocats, nat wroth but pitous and debonair, ledden tho shrewes that han don wrong to the Iugement, right as men leden syke folk to the leche, for that they sholde seken out the maladyes of sinne by torment. And by this covenaunt, either the entente of deffendours or advocats sholde faylen and cesen in al, or elles, yif the office of advocats wolde bettre profiten to men, it sholde ben torned in-to the habite of accusacioun; *that is to seyn, they sholden accuse shrewes, and nat excuse hem.* And eek the shrewes hem-self, yif hit were leveful to hem to seen at any clifte the vertu that they han forleten, and sawen that they sholden putten adoun the filthes of hir vyces, by the torments of peynes, they ne oughte nat, right for the recompensacioun for to geten hem bountee and prowesse which that they han lost, demen ne holden that thilke peynes weren torments to hem; and eek they wolden refuse the attendaunce of hir advocats, and taken hem-self to hir Iuges and to hir accusors. For which it bitydeth that, as to the wyse folk, ther nis no place y-leten to hate; *that is to seyn, that ne hate hath no place amonges wyse men.* For no wight nil haten goode men, but-yif he were over-mochel a fool; and for to haten shrewes, it nis no resoun. For right so as languissinge is maladye of body, right so ben vyces and sinne maladye of corage. And so as we ne deme nat, that they that ben syke of hir body ben worthy to ben hated, but rather worthy of pitee: wel more worthy, nat to ben hated, but for to ben had in pitee, ben they of whiche the thoughtes ben constreined by felonous wikkednesse, that is more cruel than any languissinge of body.

METRE IV.

Quid tantos iuuat excitare motus.

What delyteth you to excyten so grete moevinges *of hateredes*, and to hasten and bisien the fatal disposicioun of your deeth with your propre handes? *that is to seyn, by batailes or by contek.* For yif ye axen the deeth, it hasteth him of his owne wil; ne deeth ne tarieth nat his swifte hors. And the men that the serpent and the lyoun and the tygre and the bere and the boor seken to sleen with hir teeth, yit thilke same men seken to sleen everich of hem other with sword. Lo! for hir maneres ben dyverse and descordaunt, they moeven unrightful ostes and cruel batailes, and wilnen to perisshe by entrechaunginge of dartes. But the resoun of crueltee nis nat y-nough rightful.

Wiltow thanne yelden a covenable guerdon to the desertes of men? Love rightfully goode folk, and have pitee on shrewes.'

PROSE V.

Hic ego uideo inquam.

'Thus see I wel,' quod I, 'either what blisfulnesse or elles what unselinesse is establisshed in the desertes of goode men and of shrewes. But in this ilke fortune of poeple I see somwhat of good and somewhat of yvel. For no wyse man hath lever ben exyled, poore and nedy, and nameles, than for to dwellen in his citee and flouren of richesses, and be redoutable by honour, and strong of power. For in this wyse more cleerly and more witnesfully is the office of wyse men y-treted.

whan the blisfulnesse and the poustee of governours is, as it were, y-shad amonges poeples that be neighebours *and subgits;* sin that, namely, prisoun, lawe, and thise othre torments of laweful peynes ben rather owed to felonous citezeins, for the whiche felonous citezeins tho peynes ben establisshed, *than for good folk.* Thanne I mervaile me greetly,' quod I, 'why that the thinges ben so mis entrechaunged, that torments of felonyes pressen and confounden goode folk, and shrewes ravisshen medes of vertu, *and ben in honours and in gret estats.* And I desyre eek for to witen of thee, what semeth thee to ben the resoun of this so wrongful a conclusioun? For I wolde wondre wel the lasse, yif I trowede that al thise thinges weren medled by fortunous happe; but now hepeth and encreseth myn astonyinge god, governour of thinges, that, so as god yeveth ofte tymes to gode men godes and mirthes, and to shrewes yveles and aspre thinges: and yeveth ayeinward to gode folk hardnesses, and to shrewes he graunteth hem hir wil and that they desyren: what difference thanne may ther be bitwixen that that god doth, and the happe of fortune, yif men ne knowe nat the cause why that it is?'

'Ne it nis no mervaile,' quod she, 'though that men wenen that ther be somewhat folissh and confuse, whan the resoun of the ordre is unknowe. But al-though that thou ne knowe nat the cause of so greet a disposicioun, natheles, for as moche as god, the gode governour, atempreth and governeth the world, ne doute thee nat that alle thinges ben doon a-right.

Metre V.

Si quis Arcturi sidera nescit.

Who-so that ne knowe nat the sterres of Arcture, y-torned neigh to the soverein contree or point, *that is to seyn, y-torned neigh to the soverein pool of the firmament,* and wot nat why *the sterre* Bootes passeth or gadereth his weynes, and drencheth his late flambes in the see, and why that Botes *the sterre* unfoldeth his overswifte arysinges, thanne shal he wondren of the lawe of the heye eyr.

And eek, yif that he ne knowe nat why that the hornes of the fulle mone wexen pale and infect by the boundes of the derke night; and *how* the mone, derk and confuse, discovereth the sterrs that she hadde y-covered by hir clere visage. The comune errour moeveth folk, and maketh wery hir basins of bras by thikke strokes; *that is to seyn, that ther is a maner of poeple that highte Coribantes, that wenen that, whan the mone is in the eclipse, that it be enchaunted; and therfore, for to rescowe the mone, they beten hir basins with thikke strokes.*

Ne no man ne wondreth whan the blastes of the wind Chorus beten the strondes of the see by quakinge flodes; ne no man ne wondreth whan the weighte of the snowe, y-harded by the colde, is resolved by the brenninge hete of Phebus the sonne; for heer seen men redely the causes.

But the causes y-hid, *that is to seyn, in hevene,* troublen the brestes of men; the moevable poeple is astoned of alle thinges that comen selde and sodeinly in our age. But yif the troubly errour of our ignoraunce departede fro us, *so that we wisten the causes why that swiche thinges bi-tyden,* certes, they sholden cese to seme wondres.'

Prose VI.

Ita est, inquam.

'Thus is it,' quod I. 'But so as thou hast yeven or bi-hight me to unwrappen the hid causes of things, and to discovere me the resouns covered with derknesses, I prey thee that thou devyse and iuge me of this matere, and that thou do me to understonden it; for this miracle or this wonder troubleth me right gretly.'

And thanne she, a litel what sinyl-

inge, seyde: 'thou clepest me,' quod she, 'to telle thing that is grettest of alle thinges that mowen ben axed, and to the whiche questioun unnethes is ther aught y-nough to laven it; *as who seyth, unnethes is ther suffisauntly anything to answere parfitly to thy questioun.* For the matere of it is swich, that whan o doute is determined and cut awey, ther wexen other doutes with-oute number; right as the hevedes wexen of Ydre, *the serpent that Ercules slowh.* Ne ther ne were no manere ne non ende, but-yif that a wight constreinede tho doutes by a right lyfly and quik fyr of thought; *that is to seyn, by vigour and strengthe of wit.* For in this manere men weren wont to maken questions of the simplicitee of the purviaunce of god, and of the order of destinee, and of sodein happe, and of the knowinge and predestinacioun divyne, and of the libertee of free wille; the whiche thinges thou thy-self aperceyvest wel, of what weight they ben. But for as mochel as the knowinge of thise thinges is a maner porcioun of the medicine of thee, al-be-it so that I have litel tyme to don it, yit natheles I wol enforcen me to shewe somwhat of it. But al-thogh the norisshinges of ditee of musike delyteth thee, thou most suffren and forberen a litel of thilke delyte, whyle that I weve to thee resouns y-knit by odre.'

'As it lyketh to thee,' quod I, 'so do.' Tho spak she right as by another biginninge, and seyde thus. 'The engendringe of alle thinges,' quod she, 'and alle the progressiouns of muable nature, and al that moeveth in any manere, taketh his causes, his ordre, and his formes, of the stablenesse of the divyne thoght; and thilke divyne thought, that is y-set and put in the tour, *that is to seyn, in the heighte*, of the simplicitee of god, stablissheth many maner gyses to thinges that ben to done; the whiche maner, whan that men loken it in thilke pure clennesse of the divyne intelligence, it is y-cleped purviaunce; but whan thilke maner is referred by men to thinges that it moveth and disponeth, thanne of olde men it was cleped destinee. The whiche thinges, yif that any wight loketh wel in his thought the strengthe of that oon and of that other, he shal lightly mowen seen, that thise two thinges ben dyverse. For purviaunce is thilke divyne reson that is establisshed in the soverein prince of thinges; the whiche purviaunce disponeth alle thinges. But destinee is the disposicioun and ordinaunce clyvinge to moevable thinges, by the whiche disposicioun the purviaunce knitteth alle thinges in hir ordres; for purviaunce embraceth alle thinges to-hepe, al-thogh that they ben dyverse, and al-thogh they ben infinite; but destinee departeth and ordeineth alle thinges singulerly, and divyded in moevinges, in places, in formes, in tymes, as thus: lat the unfoldinge of temporel ordinaunce, assembled and ooned in the lokinge of the divyne thought, be cleped purviaunce; and thilke same assemblinge and ooninge, divyded and unfolden by tymes, lat that ben called destinee. And al-be-it so that thise thinges ben dyverse, yit natheles hangeth that oon on that other; forwhy the order destinal procedeth of the simplicitee of purviaunce. For right as a werkman, that aperceyveth in his thoght the forme of the thing that he wol make, and moeveth the effect of the werk, and ledeth that he hadde loked biforn in his thoght simply and presently, by temporel ordinaunce: certes, right so god disponeth in his purviaunce, singulerly and stably, the thinges that ben to done, but he aministreth in many maneres and in dyverse tymes, by destinee, thilke same thinges that he hath disponed.

Thanne, whether that destinee be exercysed outher by some divyne spirits, servaunts to the divyne purviaunce, or elles by som sowle, or elles by alle nature servinge to god, or elles by the celestial moevinges of sterres, or elles by the vertu of angeles,

or elles by the dyverse subtilitee of develes, or elles by any of hem, or elles by hem alle, the destinal ordinaunce is y-woven and acomplisshed. Certes, it is open thing, that the purviaunce is an unmoevable and simple forme of thinges to done; and the moveable bond and the temporel ordinaunce of thinges, whiche that the divyne simplicitee of purviaunce hath ordeyned to done, that is destinee. For which it is, that alle thinges that ben put under destinee ben, certes, subgits to purviaunce, to whiche purviaunce destinee itself is subgit and under. But some thinges ben put under purviaunce, that surmounten the ordinaunce of destinee; and tho ben thilke that stably ben y-ficched negh to the firste godhed: they surmounten the ordre of destinal moevabletee. For right as of cercles that tornen a-boute a same centre or a-boute a poynt, thilke cercle that is innerest or most with-inne ioyneth to the simplesse of the middel, and is, as it were, a centre or a poynt to that other cercles that tornen a-bouten him; and thilke that is outterest, compassed by larger envyronninge, is unfolden by larger spaces, in so moche as it is forthest fro the middel simplicitee of the poynt; and yif ther be any-thing that knitteth and felawshippeth him-self to thilke middel poynt, it is constreined in-to simplicitee, *that is to seyn, in-to unmoevabletee*, and it ceseth to be shad and to fleten dyversely: right so, by semblable resoun, thilke thing that departeth forthest fro the first thoght of god, it is unfolden and summitted to gretter bondes of destinee: and in so moche is the thing more free and laus fro destinee, as it axeth and holdeth him ner to thilke centre of thinges, *that is to seyn, god*. And yif the thing clyveth to the stedefastnesse of the thoght of god, and be with-oute moevinge, certes, it sormounteth the necessitee of destinee. Thanne right swich comparisoun as it is of skilinge to understondinge, and of thing that is engendred to thing that is, and of tyme to eternitee, and of the cercle to the centre, right so is the ordre of moevable destinee to the stable simplicitee of purviaunce.

Thilke ordinaunce moeveth the hevene and the sterres, and atempreth the elements to-gider amonges hemself, and transformeth hem by entrechaungeable mutacioun; and thilke same ordre neweth ayein alle thinges growinge and fallinge a-doun, by semblable progressiouns of sedes and of sexes, *that is to seyn, male and femele*. And this ilke ordre constreineth the fortunes and the dedes of men by a bond of causes, nat able to ben unbounde; the whiche destinal causes, whan they passen out fro the biginninges of the unmoevable purviaunce, it mot nedes be that they ne be nat mutable. And thus ben the thinges ful wel y-governed, yif that the simplicitee dwellinge in the divyne thoght sheweth forth the ordre of causes, unable to ben y-bowed; and this ordre constreineth by his propre stabletee the moevable thinges, or elles they sholden fleten folily. For which it is, that alle thinges semen to ben confus and trouble to us men, for we ne mowen nat considere thilke ordinaunce; natheles, the propre maner of every thinge, dressinge hem to goode, disponeth hem alle.

For ther nis no-thing don for cause of yvel; ne thilke thing that is don by wikkede folk *nis nat don for yvel*. The whiche shrewes, as I have shewed ful plentivously, seken good, but wikked errour mistorneth hem, ne the ordre cominge fro the poynt of soverein good ne declyneth nat fro his biginninge. But thou mayst seyn, what unreste may ben a worse confusioun than that gode men han sometyme adversitee and somtyme prosperitee, and shrewes also now han thinges that they desiren, and now thinges that they haten? Whether men liven now in swich hoolnesse of thoght, (*as who seyth, ben men now so wyse*), that swiche folk as they

demen to ben gode folk or shrewes, that it moste nedes ben that folk ben swiche as they wenen? But in this manere the domes of men discorden, that thilke men that some folk demen worthy of mede, other folk demen hem worthy of torment. But lat us graunte, I pose that som man may wel demen or knowen the gode folk and the badde; may he thanne knowen and seen thilke innereste atempraunce of corages, as it hath ben wont to be seyd of bodies; *as who seyth, may a man speken and determinen of atempraunces in corages, as men were wont to demen or speken of complexiouns and atempraunces of bodies?* Ne it ne is nat an unlyk miracle, to hem that ne knowen it nat, (*as who seith, but it is lyke a merveil or a miracle to hem that ne knowen it nat*), why that swete thinges ben covenable to some bodies that ben hole, and to some bodies bittere thinges ben covenable; and also, why that some syke folk ben holpen with lighte medicynes, and some folk ben holpen with sharpe medicynes. But natheles, the leche that knoweth the manere and the atempraunce of hele and of maladye, ne merveileth of it no-thing. But what other thing semeth hele of corages but bountee and prowesse? And what other thing semeth maladye *of corages* but vyces? Who is elles kepere of good or dryver awey of yvel, but god, governour and lecher of thoughtes? The whiche god, whan he hath biholden from the heye tour of his purveaunce, he knoweth what is covenable to every wight, and leneth hem that he wot that is covenable to hem. Lo, her-of comth and her-of is don this noble miracle of the ordre destinal, whan god, that al knoweth, doth swiche thing, of which thing that unknowinge folk ben astoned. But for to constreine, *as who seyth, but for to comprehende and telle* a fewe thinges of the divyne deepnesse, the whiche that mannes resoun may understonde, thilke man that thou wenest to ben right Iuste and right kepinge of equitee, the contrarie of that semeth to the divyne purveaunce, that al wot. And Lucan, my familer, telleth that "the victorious cause lykede to the goddes, and the cause overcomen lykede to Catoun." Thanne, what-so-ever thou mayst seen that is don in this werld unhoped or unwened, certes, it is the right ordre of thinges; but, as to thy wikkede opinioun, it is a confusioun. But I suppose that som man be so wel y-thewed, that the divyne Iugement and the Iugement of mankinde acorden hem to-gider of him; but he is so unstedefast of corage, that, yif any adversitee come to him, he wol forleten, par-aventure, to continue innocence, by the whiche he ne may nat with-holden fortune. Thanne the wyse dispensacioun of god spareth him, the whiche man adversitee mighte enpeyren; for that god wol nat suffren him to travaile, to whom that travaile nis nat covenable. Another man is parfit in alle vertues, and is an holy man, and negh to god, so that the purviaunce of god wolde demen, that it were a felonye that he were touched with any adversitees; so that he wol nat suffre that swich a man be moeved with any bodily maladye. But so as seyde a philosophre, the more excellent by me: *he seyde in Grek*, that "vertues han edified the body of the holy man." And ofte tyme it bityideth, that the somme of thinges that ben to done is taken to governe to gode folk, for that the malice haboundaunt of shrewes sholde ben abated. And god yeveth and departeth to othre folk prosperitees and adversitees y-medled to-hepe, after the qualitee of hir corages, and remordeth som folk *by adversitee*, for they ne sholde nat wexen proude by longe welefulnesse. And other folk he suffreth to ben travailed with harde thinges, for that they sholden confermen the vertues of corage by the usage and exercitacioun of pacience. And other fold dreden more than

they oughten [that] whiche they mighten wel beren; and somme dispyse that they mowe nat beren; and thilke folk god ledeth in-to experience of himself by aspre and sorwful thinges. And many othre folk han bought honourable renoun of this world by the prys of glorious deeth. And som men, that ne mowen nat ben overcomen by torments, have yeven ensaumple to othre folk, that vertu may nat ben overcomen by adversitees; and of alle thinges ther nis no doute, that they ne ben don rightfully and ordenely, to the profit of hem to whom we seen thise thinges bityde. For certes, that adversitee comth somtyme to shrewes, and somtyme that that they desiren, it comth of thise forseide causes. And of sorwful thinges *that bityden to shrewes*, certes, no man ne wondreth; for alle men wenen that they han wel deserved it, and that they ben of wikkede merite; of whiche shrewes the torment somtyme agasteth othre to don felonyes, and somtyme it amendeth hem that suffren the torments. And the prosperitee *that is yeven to shrewes* sheweth a greet argument to gode folk, what thing they sholde demen of thilke welefulnesse, the whiche prosperitee men seen ofte serven to shrewes. In the which thing I trowe that god dispenseth; for, per-aventure, the nature of som man is so overthrowinge *to yvel*, and so uncovenable, that the nedy povertee of his houshold mighte rather egren him to don felonyes. And to the maladye of him god putteth remedie, to yeven him richesses. And som other man biholdeth his conscience defouled with sinnes, and maketh comparisoun of his fortune and of him-self; and dredeth, peraventure, that his blisfulnesse, of which the usage is Ioyeful to him, that the lesinge of thilke blisfulnesse ne be nat sorwful to him; and therfor he wol chaunge his maneres, and, for he dredeth to lese his fortune, he forleteth his wikkednesse. To othre folk is welefulnesse y-yeven unworthily, the whiche overthroweth hem into distruccioun that they han deserved. And to som othre folk is yeven power to punisshen, for that it shal be cause of *continuacioun and* exercysinge to gode folk and cause of torment to shrewes. For so as ther nis non alyaunce by-twixe gode folk and shrewes, ne shrewes ne mowen nat acorden amonges hem-self. And why nat? For shrewes discorden of hem-self by hir vyces, the whiche vyces al to-renden hir consciences; and don ofte tyme thinges, the whiche thinges, whan they han don hem, they demen that tho thinges ne sholden nat han ben don. For which thing thilke soverein purveaunce hath maked ofte tyme fair miracle; so that shrewes han maked shrewes to ben gode men. For whan that som shrewes seen that they suffren wrongfully felonyes of othre shrewes, they wexen eschaufed in-to hate of hem that anoyeden hem, and retornen to the frut of vertu, whan they studien to ben unlyk to hem that they han hated. Certes, only this is the divyne might, to the whiche might yveles ben thanne gode, whan it useth tho yveles covenably, and draweth out the effect of any gode; *as who seyth, that yvel is good only to the might of god, for the might of god ordeyneth thilke yvel to good.*

For oon ordre embraseth alle thinges, so that what wight that departeth fro the resoun of thilke ordre which that is assigned to him, algates yit he slydeth in-to another ordre, so that no-thing nis leveful to folye in the reame of the divyne purviaunce; *as who seyth, nothing nis with-outen ordinaunce in the reame of the divyne purviaunce;* sin that the right stronge god governeth alle thinges in this world. For it nis nat leveful to man to comprehenden by wit, ne unfolden by word, alle the subtil ordinaunces and disposiciouns of the divyne entente. For only it oughte suffise to han loked, that god him-self, maker

of alle natures, ordeineth and dresseth alle thinges to gode; whyl that he hasteth to with-holden the thinges that he hath maked in-to his semblaunce, *that is to seyn, for to with-holden thinges in-to good, for he him-self is good,* he chaseth out al yvel fro the boundes of his comunalitee by the ordre of necessitee destinable. For which it folweth, that yif thou loke the purviaunce ordeininge the thinges that men wenen ben outrageous or haboundant in erthes, thou ne shalt nat seen in no place no-thing of yvel. But I see now that thou art charged with the weighte of the questioun, and wery with the lengthe of my resoun; and that thou abydest som sweetnesse of songe. Tak thanne this draught; and whan thou art wel refresshed and refect, thou shal be more stedefast to stye in-to heyere questiouns.

METRE VI.

Si uis celsi iura tonantis.

If thou, wys, wilt demen in thy pure thought the rightes or the lawes of the heye thonderer, *that is to seyn, of god,* loke thou and bihold the heightes of the soverein hevene. There kepen the sterres, by rightful alliaunce of thinges, hir olde pees. The sonne, y-moeved by his rody fyr, ne distorbeth nat the colde cercle of the mone. Ne the sterre y-cleped "the Bere," that enclyneth his ravisshinge courses abouten the soverein heighte of the worlde, ne the same stere Ursa nis never-mo wasshen in the depe westrene see, ne coveiteth nat to deyen his flaumbes in the see of the occian, al-thogh he see othre sterres y-plounged in the see. And Hesperus *the sterre* bodeth and telleth alwey the late nightes; and Lucifer *the sterre* bringeth ayein the clere day.

And thus maketh Love entrechaungeable the perdurable courses; and thus is discordable bataile y-put out of the contree of the sterres. This acordaunce atempreth by evenelyk maneres the elements, that the moiste thinges, stryvinge with the drye thinges, yeven place by stoundes; and the colde thinges ioynen hem by feyth to the hote thinges; and that the lighte fyr aryseth in-to heighte; and the hevy erthes avalen by hir weightes. By thise same causes the floury yeer yildeth swote smelles in the firste somer-sesoun warminge; and the hote somer dryeth the cornes; and autumpne comth ayein, hevy of apples; and the fletinge reyn bideweth the winter. This atempraunce norissheth and bringeth forth al thing that bretheth lyf in this world; and thilke same atempraunce, ravisshinge, hydeth and binimeth, and drencheth under the laste deeth, alle thinges y-born.

Amonges thise thinges sitteth the heye maker, king and lord, welle and biginninge, lawe and wys Iuge, to don equitee; and governeth and enclyneth the brydles of thinges. And tho thinges that he stereth to gon by moevinge, he withdraweth and aresteth; and affermeth the moevable or wandringe thinges. For yif that he ne clepede ayein the right goinge of thinges, and yif that he ne constreinede hem nat eft-sones in-to roundnesses enclynede, the thinges that ben now continued by stable ordinaunce, they sholden departen from hir welle, *that is to seyn, from hir biginninge,* and faylen, *that is to seyn, torne in-to nought.*

This is the comune Love to alle thinges; and alle thinges axen to ben holden by the fyn of good. For elles ne mighten they nat lasten, yif they ne come nat eft-sones ayein, by Love retorned, to the cause that hath yeven hem beinge, *that is to seyn, to god.*

PROSE VII.

Iamne igitur uides.

Seestow nat thanne what thing folweth alle the thinges that I have seyd?' *Boece.* 'What thing?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod she, 'al-outrely, that alle fortune is good.'

'And how may that be?' quod I.

'Now understand,' quod she, 'so as alle fortune, whether so it be Ioyeful fortune or aspre fortune, is yeven either by cause of guerdoning or elles of exercysinge of good folk, or elles by cause to punisshen or elles chastysen shrewes; thanne is alle fortune good, the whiche fortune is certein that it be either rightful or elles profitable.'

'Forsothe, this is a ful verray resoun,' quod I; 'and yif I consider the purviaunce and the destinee that thou taughtest me a litel her-biforn, this sentence is sustened by stedefast resouns. But yif it lyke unto thee, lat us noumbren hem amonges thilke thinges, of whiche thou seydest a litel her-biforn, that they ne were nat able to ben wened to the poeple.'

'Why so?' quod she.

'For that the comune word of men,' quod I, 'misuseth this *maner speche of fortune*, and seyn ofte tymes that the fortune of som wight is wikkede.'

'Wiltow thanne,' quod she, 'that I aproche a litel to the wordes of the poeple, so that it seme nat to hem that I be overmoche departed as fro the usage of mankinde?'

'As thou wolt,' quod I.

'Demestow nat,' quod she, 'that al thing that profiteth is good?'

'Yis,' quod I.

'And certes, thilke thing that exercyseth or corigeth, profiteth?'

'I confesse it wel,' quod I.

'Thanne is it good?' quod she.

'Why nat?' quod I.

'But this is the fortune,' quod she, 'of hem that either ben put in vertu and batailen ayeins aspre thinges, or elles of hem that eschuen and declynen fro vyces and taken the wey of vertu.'

'This ne may I nat denye,' quod I.

'But what seystow of the mery fortune that is yeven to good folk in guerdoun? Demeth aught the poeple that it is wikked?'

'Nay, forsothe,' quod I; 'but they demen, as it sooth is, that it is right good.'

'And what seystow of that other fortune,' quod she, 'that, al-thogh that it be aspre, and restreineth the shrewes by rightful torment, weneth aught the poeple that it be good?'

'Nay,' quod I, 'but the poeple demeth that it is most wrecched of alle thinges that may ben thought.'

'War now, and loke wel,' quod she, 'lest that we, in folwinge the opinioun of the poeple, have confessed and concluded thing that is unable to be wened *to the poeple*.'

'What is that?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod she, 'it folweth or comth of thinges that ben graunted, that alle fortune, what-so-ever it be, of hem that ben either in possessioun of vertu, or in the encres of vertu, or elles in the purchasinge of vertu, that thilke fortune is good; and that alle fortune is right wikkede to hem that dwellen in shrewednesse;' *as who seyth, and thus weneth nat the poeple.*

'That is sooth,' quod I, 'al-be-it so that no man dar confesse it ne biknowen it.'

'Why so?' quod she; 'for right as the stronge man ne semeth nat to abaissen or disdaignen as ofte tyme as he hereth the noise of the bataile, ne also it ne semeth nat, to the wyse man, to beren it grevously, as ofte as he is lad in-to the stryf of fortune. For bothe to that oon man and eek to that other thilke difficultee is the matere; to that oon man, of encres of his glorious renoun, and to that other man, to conforme his sapience, *that is to seyn, to the aspirenesse of his estat.* For therfore is it called "vertu," for that it susteneth and enforseth, by hise strengthes, that it nis nat overcomen by adversitees. Ne certes, thou that art put in the encres or in the heighte of vertu, ne hast nat comen to fleten with delices, and for to welken in bodily luste; thou sowest or plauntest a ful egre bataile *in thy corage* ayeins every

fortune: for that the sorwful fortune ne confounde thee nat, ne that the merye fortune ne corumpe thee nat, occupye the mene by stedefast strengthes. For al that ever is under the mene, or elles al that overpasseth the mene, despyseth welefulnesse (*as who seyth, it is vicious*), and ne hath no mede of his travaile. For it is set in your hand (*as who seyth, it lyth in your power*) what fortune yow is levest, *that is to seyn, good or yvel.* For alle fortune that semeth sharp or aspre, yif it ne exercyse nat *the gode folk* ne chastyseth *the wikked folk*, it punissheth.

Metre VII.

Bella bis quinis operatus annis.

The wreker Attrides, *that is to seyn, Agamenon*, that wroughte and continuede the batailes by ten yeer, recovered and purgede *in wrekinge*, by the destruccioun of Troye, the loste chaumbres of mariage of his brother; *this is to seyn, that he, Agamenon, wan ayein Eleyne, that was Menelaus wyf his brother.* In the mene whyle that thilke *Agamenon* desirede to yeven sayles to the Grekissh navye, and boughte ayein the windes by blood, he unclothede him of pitee of fader; and the sory preest yiveth in sacrifyinge the wrecched cuttinge of throte of the doughter; *that is to seyn, that Agamenon let cutten the throte of his doughter by the preest, to maken allyaunce with his goddes, and for to han winde with whiche he mighte wenden to Troye.*

Itacus, *that is to seyn Ulixes*, biwepte his felawes y-lorn, the whiche felawes the ferse Poliphemus, ligginge in his grete cave, hadde freten and dreynt in his empty wombe. But natheles Poliphemus, wood for his blinde visage, yald to Ulixes Ioye by his sorwful teres; *this is to seyn, that Ulixes smoot out the eye of Poliphemus that stood in his forehed, for which Ulixes hadde Ioye, whan he say Poliphemus wepinge and blinde.*

Hercules is celebrable for his harde travailes; he dauntede the proude Centaures, *half hors, half man;* and he birafte the dispoylinge fro the cruel lyoun, *that is to seyn, he slowh the lyoun and rafte him his skin.* He smoot the briddes *that highten Arpyes* with certein arwes. He ravisshede apples fro the wakinge dragoun, and his hand was the more hevy for the goldene metal. He drow Cerberus, *the hound of helle*, by his treble cheyne. He, overcomer, as it is seyd, hath put an unmeke lord foddre to his cruel hors; *this is to seyn, that Hercules slowh Diomedes, and made his hors to freten him.* And he, Hercules, slowh Ydra *the serpent*, and brende the venim. And Achelous the flood, defouled in his forhed, dreynte his shamefast visage in his strondes; *this is to seyn, that Achelous coude transfigure him-self in-to dyverse lyknesses; and, as he faught with Hercules, at the laste he tornede him in-to a bole; and Hercules brak of oon of his hornes, and he, for shame, hidde him in his river.* And he, Hercules, caste adoun Antheus the gyaunt in the strondes of Libie; and Cacus apaysede the wratthes of Evander; *this is to seyn, that Hercules slowh the monstre Cacus, and apaysede with that deeth the wratthe of Evander.* And the bristlede boor markede with scomes the shuldres of Hercules, the whiche shuldres the heye cercle of hevene sholde thriste. And the laste of his labours was, that he sustened the hevene up-on his nekke unbowed; and he deservede eft-sones the hevene, to ben the prys of his laste travaile.

Goth now thanne, ye stronge men, ther-as the heye wey of the grete ensaumple ledeth yow. O nyce men, why nake ye youre bakkes? *As who seyth: O ye slowe and delicat men, why flee ye adversitees, and ne*

fighten nat ayeins hem by vertu, to winnen the mede of the hevene? For the erthe, overcommen, yeveth the sterres'; *this is to seyn, that, whan that erthely lust is overcomen, a man is maked worthy to the hevene.*

BOOK V.

Prose I.

Dixerat, orationisque cursum.

She hadde seyd, and torned the cours of hir resoun to some othre thinges to ben treted and to ben y-sped. Thanne seyde I, 'Certes, rightful is thyn amonestinge and ful digne by auctoritee. But that thou seidest whylom, that the questioun of the divyne purviaunce is enlaced with many other questiouns, I understonde wel and proeve it by the same thing. But I axe yif that thou wenest that hap be any thing, in any weys; and, yif thou wenest that hap be anything, what is it?'

Thanne quod she, 'I haste me to yilden and assoilen to thee the dette of my bihest, and to shewen and opnen the wey, by which wey thou mayst come ayein to thy contree. But al-be-it so that the thinges which that thou axest ben right profitable to knowe, yit ben they diverse somwhat fro the path of my purpos; and it is to douten that thou ne be maked wery by mis-weyes, so that thou ne mayst nat suffyce to mesuren the right wey.'

'Ne doute thee ther-of nothing,' quod I. 'For, for to knowen thilke thinges to-gedere, in the whiche thinges I delyte me greetly, that shal ben to me in stede of reste; sin it is nat to douten of the thinges folwinge, whan every syde of thy disputacioun shal han be stedefast to me by undoutous feith.'

Thanne seyde she, 'That manere wol I don thee'; and bigan to speken right thus. 'Certes,' quod she, 'yif any wight diffinisshe hap in this manere, that is to seyn, that "hap is bitydinge y-brought forth by foolish moevinge and by no knettinge of causes," I conferme that hap nis right naught in no wyse; and I deme aloutrely that hap nis, ne dwelleth but a voice, *as who seith, but an ydel word*, with-outen any significacioun of thing submitted to that vois. For what place mighte ben left, or dwellinge, to folye and to disordenaunce, sin that god ledeth and constreineth alle thinges by ordre? For this sentence is verray and sooth, that "nothing ne hath his beinge of naught"; to the whiche sentence none of thise olde folk ne withseyde never; al-be-it so that they ne understoden ne meneden it naught by god, prince and beginnere of werkinge, but they casten [it] as a manere foundement of subiect material, that is to seyn, of the nature of alle resoun. And yif that any thing is woxen or comen of no causes, than shal it seme that thilke thing is comen or woxen of naught; but yif this ne may nat ben don, thanne is it nat possible, that hap be any swich thing as I have diffinisshed a litel heer-biforn.'

'How shal it thanne be?' quod I. 'Nis ther thanne no-thing that by right may be cleped either "hap" or elles "aventure of fortune"; or is ther aught, al-be-it so that it is hid fro the peple, to which these wordes ben covenable?'

'Myn Aristotulis,' quod she, 'in the book of his Phisik, diffinissheth this thing by short resoun, and neigh to the sothe.'

'In which manere?' quod I.

'As ofte,' quod she, 'as men doon any thing for grace of any other thing, and an-other thing than thilke thing that men entenden to don bitydeth by some causes, it is cleped "hap." Right as a man dalf the erthe by cause of tilyinge of the feeld,

and founde ther a gobet of gold bidolven, thanne wenen folk that it is bifalle by fortunous bitydinge. But, for sothe, it nis nat of naught, for it hath his propre causes; of whiche causes the cours unforeseyn and unwar semeth to han maked hap. For yif the tilyere of the feld ne dolve nat in the erthe, and yif the hyder of the gold ne hadde hid the gold in thilke place, the gold ne hadde nat been founde. Thise ben thanne the causes of the abregginge of fortuit hap, the which abregginge of fortuit hap comth of causes encountringe and flowinge to-gidere to hem-self, and nat by the entencioun of the doer. For neither the hyder of the gold ne the delver of the feeld ne understoden nat that the gold sholde han ben founde; but, as I sayde, it bitidde and ran to-gidere that he dalf ther-as that other hadde hid the gold. Now may I thus diffinisshe "hap." Hap is an unwar bitydinge of causes assembled in thinges that ben don for som other thing. But thilke ordre, procedinge by an uneschuable bindinge to-gidere, which that descendeth fro the welle of purviaunce that ordeineth alle thinges in hir places and in hir tymes, maketh that the causes rennen and assemblen to-gidere.

Metre I.

Rupis Achemenie scopulis, ubi uersa sequentum.

Tigris and Eufrates resolven and springen of oo welle, in the cragges of the roche of the contree of Achemenie, ther-as the fleinge bataile ficcheth hir dartes, retorned in the brestes of hem that folwen hem. And sone after tho same riveres, Tigris and Eufrates, unioinen and departen hir wateres. And yif they comen to-gideres, and ben assembled and cleped to-gidere into o cours, thanne moten thilke thinges fleten to-gidere which that the water of the entrechaunginge flood bringeth. The shippes and the stokkes arraced with the flood moten assemblen; and the wateres y-medled wrappeth or impleyeth many fortunel happes or maneres; the whiche wandringe happes, natheles, thilke declyninge lownesse of the erthe and the flowinge ordre of the slydinge water governeth. Right so Fortune, that semeth as that it fleteth with slaked or ungovernede brydles, it suffereth brydles, *that is to seyn, to be governed*, and passeth by thilke lawe, *that is to seyn, by thilke divyne ordenaunce*.'

Prose II.

Animaduerto, inquam.

'This understonde I wel,' quod I, 'and I acorde wel that it is right as thou seyst. But I axe yif ther be any libertee of free wil in this ordre of causes that clyven thus to-gidere in hem-self; or elles I wolde witen yif that the destinal cheyne constreineth the movinges of the corages of men?'

'Yis,' quod she; 'ther is libertee of free wil. Ne ther ne was nevere no nature of resoun that it ne hadde libertee of free wil. For every thing that may naturely usen resoun, it hath doom by which it decerneth and demeth every thing; thanne knoweth it, by it-self, thinges that ben to fleen and thinges that ben to desiren. And thilke thing that any wight demeth to ben desired, that axeth or desireth he; and fleeth thilke thing that he troweth ben to fleen. Wherfore in alle thinges that resoun is, in hem also is libertee of willinge and of nillinge. But I ne ordeyne nat, *as who seyth, I ne graunte nat*, that this libertee be evene-lyk in alle thinges. Forwhy in the sovereines devynes substaunces, *that is to seyn, in spirits*, lugement is more cleer, and wil nat y-corumped, and might redy to speden thinges that ben desired. But the soules of men moten nedes be more free whan

they loken hem in the speculacioun or lokinge of the devyne thought, and lasse free whan they slyden in-to the bodies; and yit lasse free whan they ben gadered to-gidere and comprehended in erthely membres. But the laste servage is whan that they ben yeven to vyces, and han y-falle from the possessioun of hir propre resoun. For after that they han cast awey hir eyen fro the light of the sovereyn soothfastnesse to lowe thinges and derke, anon they derken by the cloude of ignoraunce and ben troubled by felonous talents; to the whiche talents whan they aprochen and asenten, they hepen and encresen the servage which they han ioyned to hem-self; and in this manere they ben caitifs fro hir propre libertee. The whiche thinges, nathelesse, the lokinge of the devyne purviaunce seeth, that alle thinges biholdeth and seeth fro eterne, and ordeineth hem everich in hir merites as they ben predestinat: *and it is seyd in Greek, that* "alle thinges he seeth and alle thinges he hereth."

METRE II.

Puro clarum lumine Phebum.

Homer with the hony mouth, *that is to seyn, Homer with the swete ditees*, singeth, that the sonne is cleer by pure light; natheles yit ne may it nat, by the infirme light of his bemes, breken or percen the inwarde entrailes of the erthe, or elles of the see. So ne seeth nat *god*, maker of the grete world: to him, that loketh alle thinges from an heigh, ne withstondeth nat no thinges by hevinesse of erthe; ne the night ne withstondeth nat to him by the blake cloudes. *Thilke god* seeth, in oo strok of thought, alle thinges that ben, or weren, or sholle comen; and *thilke god*, for he loketh and seeth alle thinges alone, thou mayst seyn that he is the verray sonne.'

PROSE III.

Tum ego, en, inquam.

Thanne seyde I, 'now am I confounded by a more hard doute than I was.'

'What doute is that?' quod she. 'For certes, I coniecte now by whiche thinges thou art troubled.'

'It semeth,' quod I, 'to repugnen and to contrarien greetly, that god knoweth biforn alle thinges, and that ther is any freedom of libertee. For yif so be that god loketh alle thinges biforn, ne god ne may nat ben desseived in no manere, than mot it nedes been, that alle thinges bityden the whiche that the purviaunce of god hath seyn biforn to comen. For which, yif that god knoweth biforn nat only the werkes of men, but also hir conseiles and hir willes, thanne ne shal ther be no libertee of arbitre; ne, certes, ther ne may be noon other dede, ne no wil, but thilke which that the divyne purviaunce, that may nat ben desseived, hath feled biforn. For yif that they mighten wrythen awey in othre manere than they ben purveyed, than sholde ther be no stedefast prescience of thing to comen, but rather an uncertein opinioun; the whiche thing to trowen of god, I deme it felonye and unleveful. Ne I ne proeve nat thilke same resoun, *as who seyth, I ne alowe nat, or I ne preyse nat, thilke same resoun*, by which that som men wenen that they mowen assoilen and unknitten the knotte of this questioun. For, certes, they seyn that thing nis nat to comen for that the purviaunce of god hath seyn it biforn that is to comen, but rather the contrarye, *and that is this*: that, for that the thing is to comen, therfore ne may it nat ben hid fro the purviaunce of god; and in this manere this necessitee slydeth ayein in-to the contrarye partye: ne it ne bihoveth nat, nedes, that thinges bityden that ben purvyed, but it bihoveth, nedes, that thinges that ben to comen ben y-porveyed: but as it were y-travailed,

as who seyth, that thilke answere procedeth right as thogh men travaileden, or weren bisy to enqueren, the whiche thing is cause of the whiche thing: — as, whether the prescience is cause of the necessitee of thinges to comen, or elles that the necessitee of thinges to comen is cause of the purviaunce. But I ne enforce me nat now to shewen it, that the bitydinge of thinges y-wist biforn is necessarie, how so or in what manere that the ordre of causes hath it-self; al-thogh that it ne seme nat that the prescience bringe in necessitee of bitydinge to thinges to comen. For certes, yif that any wight sitteth, it bihoveth by necessitee that the opinioun be sooth of him that coniecteth that he sitteth; and ayeinward also is it of the contrarye: yif the opinioun be sooth of any wight for that he sitteth, it bihoveth by necessitee that he sitte. Thanne is heer necessitee in that oon and in that other: for in that oon is necessitee of sittinge, and, certes, in that other is necessitee of sooth. But therfore ne sitteth nat a wight, for that the opinioun of the sittinge is sooth; but the opinioun is rather sooth, for that a wight sitteth biforn. And thus, al-thogh that the cause of the sooth cometh of that other syde (*as who seyth, that al-thogh the cause of sooth comth of the sitting, and nat of the trewe opinioun*), algates yit is ther comune necessitee in that oon and in that other. Thus sheweth it, that I may make semblable skiles of the purviaunce of god and of thinges to comen. For althogh that, for that thinges ben to comen, ther-fore ben they purveyed, nat, certes, for that they ben purveyed, ther-fore ne bityde they nat. Yit natheles, bihoveth it by necessitee, that either the thinges to comen ben y-purveyed of god, or elles that the thinges that ben purveyed of god bityden. And this thing only suffiseth y-nough to destroyen the freedom of oure arbitre, *that is to seyn, of oure free wil.* But now, certes, *sheweth it wel, how fer fro the sothe and* how up-so-doun is this thing that we seyn, that the bitydinge of temporel thinges is cause of the eterne prescience. But for to wenen that god purvyeth the thinges to comen for they ben to comen, what other thing is it but for to wene that thilke thinges that bitidden whylom ben causes of thilke soverein purvyaunce *that is in god?* And her-to *I adde yit this thing:* that, right as whan that I wot that a thing is, it bihoveth by necessitee that thilke selve thing be; and eek, whan I have knowe that any thing shal bityden, so byhoveth it by necessitee that thilke thing bityde: — so folweth it thanne, that the bitydinge of the thing y-wist biforn ne may nat ben eschued. And at the laste, yif that any wight wene a thing to ben other weyes thanne it is, it is nat only unscience, but it is deceivable opinioun ful diverse and fer fro the sothe of science. Wherfore, yif any thing be so to comen, that the bitydinge of hit ne be nat certein ne necessarie, who may weten biforn that thilke thing is to comen? For right as science ne may nat ben medled with falsnesse (*as who seyth, that yif I wot a thing, it ne may nat be false that I ne wot it*), right so thilke thing that is conceived by science ne may nat ben non other weys than as it is conceived. For that is the cause why that science wanteth lesing (*as who seyth, why that witinge ne receiveth nat lesinge of that it wot*); for it bihoveth, by necessitee, that every thing be right as science comprehendeth it to be. What shal I thanne seyn? In whiche manere knoweth god biforn the thinges to comen, yif they ne be nat certein? For yif that he deme that they ben to comen uneschewably, and so may be that it is possible that they ne shollen nat comen, god is deceived. But nat only to trowen that god is deceived, but for to speke it with mouth, it is a felonous sinne. But yif that god wot that, right so as thinges ben *to comen,* so shullen they comen — so that he wite egaly, *as*

who seyth, indifferently, that thinges mowen ben doon or elles nat y-doon — what is thilke prescience that ne comprehendeth no certein thing ne stable? Or elles what difference is ther bitwixe the prescience and thilke Iape-worthy divyninge of Tiresie the divynour, *that seyde:* "Al that I seye," quod he, "either it shal be, or elles it ne shal nat be?" Or elles how mochel is worth the devyne prescience more than the opinioun of mankinde, yif so be that it demeth the thinges uncertein, as men doon; of the whiche domes of men the bitydinge nis nat certein? But yif so be that non uncertein thing ne may ben in him that is right certein welle of alle thinges, thanne is the bityding certein of thilke thinges whiche he hath wist biforn fermely to comen. For which it folweth, that the freedom of the conseiles and of the werkes of mankind nis non, sin that the thoght of god, that seeth alle thinges without errour of falsnesse, bindeth and constreineth hem to a bitydinge *by necessitee*. And yif this thing be ones y-graunted and received, *that is to seyn, that ther nis no free wille*, than sheweth it wel, how greet destruccioun and how grete damages ther folwen of thinges of mankinde. For in ydel ben ther thanne purposed and bihight medes to gode folk, and peynes to badde folk, sin that no moevinge of free corage voluntarie ne hath nat deserved hem, *that is to seyn, neither mede ne peyne;* and it sholde seme thanne, that thilke thing is alderworst, which that is now demed for aldermost iust and most rightful, *that is to seyn*, that shrewes ben punisshed, or elles that gode folk ben y-gerdoned: the whiche folk, sin that hir propre wil ne sent hem nat to that oon ne to that other, *that is to seyn, neither to gode ne to harm*, but constreineth hem certein necessitee of thinges to comen: thanne ne shollen ther nevere ben, ne nevere weren, vyce ne vertu, but it sholde rather ben confusioun of alle desertes medled with-outen discrecioun. And yit *ther folweth an-other inconvenient*, of the whiche ther ne may ben thoght no more felonous ne more wikke; *and that is this:* that, so as the ordre of thinges is y-led and comth of the purviaunce of god, ne that no-thing nis leveful to the conseiles of mankinde (*as who seyth, that men han no power to doon no-thing, ne wilne no-thing*), than folweth it, that oure vyces ben referred to the maker of alle good (*as who seyth, than folweth it, that god oughte han the blame of oure vyces, sin he constreineth us by necessitee to doon vyces*). Thanne is ther no resoun to hopen *in god*, ne for to preyen *to god;* for what sholde any wight hopen *to god*, or why sholde he preyen *to god*, sin that the ordenaunce of destinee, which that ne may nat ben inclyned, knitteth and streineth alle thinges that men may desiren? Thanne sholde ther be doon awey thilke only allyaunce bitwixen god and men, that is to seyn, to hopen and to preyen. But by the prys of rightwisnesse and of verray mekenesse we deserven the gerdoun of the divyne grace, which that is inestimable, *that is to seyn, that it is so greet, that it ne may nat ben ful y-preysed.* And this is only the manere, *that is to seyn, hope and preyeres*, for which it semeth that men mowen speke with god, and by resoun of supplicacioun be conioined to thilke cleernesse, that nis nat aproched no rather or that men beseken it and impetren it. And yif men wene nat that hope ne preyeres ne han no strengthes, by the necessitee of thinges to comen y-received, what thing is ther thanne by whiche we mowen ben conioined and clyven to thilke soverein prince of thinges? For which it bihoveth, by necessitee, that the linage of mankinde, as thou songe a litel her-biforn, be departed and unioined from his welle, and failen *of his biginninge, that is to seyn, god.*

METRE III.

Quenam discors federa rerum.

What discordable cause hath to-rent and unioined the bindinge, *or the alliaunce,* of thinges, *that is to seyn, the coniunccioun of god and man?* Whiche god hath establisshed so greet bataile bitwixen thise two soothfast or verray thinges, *that is to seyn, bitwixen the purviaunce of god and free wil,* that they ben singuler and devyded, ne that they ne wolen nat be medeled ne coupled to-gidere? But ther nis no discord to the verray thinges, but they clyven, certein, alwey to hem-self. But the thought of man, confounded and overthrowen by the dirke membres of the body, ne may nat, by fyr of his derked looking, *that is to seyn, by the vigour of his insighte, whyl the soule is in the body,* knowe the thinne subtil knittinges of thinges. But wherfore enchaufeth it so, by so greet love, to finden thilke notes of sooth y-covered; *that is to seyn, wherfore enchaufeth the thoght of man by so greet desyr to knowen thilke notificacions that ben y-hid under the covertoures of sooth?* Wot it aught thilke thing that it, anguissous, desireth to knowe? *As who seith, nay; for no man travaileth for to witen thinges that he wot. And therfore the texte seith thus:* but who travaileth to witen thinges y-knowe? And yif that he ne knoweth hem nat, what seketh thilke blinde thoght? What is he that desireth any thing of which he wot right naught? *As who seith, who so desireth any thing, nedes, somwhat he knoweth of it; or elles, he ne coude nat desire it.* Or who may folwen thinges that ne ben nat y-wist? *And thogh that he seke tho thinges,* wher shal he finde hem? What wight, that is al unconninge and ignoraunt, may knowen the forme that is y-founde? But whan the soule biholdeth and seeth the heye thoght, *that is to seyn, god,* than knoweth it to-gidere the somme and the singularitees, *that is to seyn, the principles and everich by him-self.*

But now, whyl the soule is hid in the cloude and in the derkenesse of the membres of the body, it ne hath nat al for-yeten it-self, but it withholdeth the somme of thinges, and leseth the singularitees. Thanne, who-so that seeketh soothnesse, he nis in neither nother habite; for he noot nat al, ne he ne hath nat al foryeten: but yit him remembreth the somme of thinges that he withholdeth, and axeth conseil, and retreteth deepliche thinges y-seyn biforn, *that is to seyn, the grete somme in his minde:* so that he mowe adden the parties that he hath foryeten to thilke that he hath withholden.'

PROSE IV.

Tum illa: Vetus, inquit, hec est.

Thanne seide she: 'this is,' quod she, 'the olde question of the purviaunce of god; and Marcus Tullius, whan he devyded the divynacioun, *that is to seyn, in his book that he wroot of divynacioun,* he moevede gretly this questioun; and thou thyself has y-sought it mochel, and outrely, and longe; but yit ne hath it nat ben determined ne y-sped fermely and diligently of any of yow. And the cause of this derkenesse and of this difficultee is, for that the moevinge of the resoun of mankinde ne may nat moeven to (*that is to seyn, applyen or ioinen to*) the simplicitee of the devyne prescience; the whiche *simplicitee of the devyne prescience,* yif that men mighten thinken it in any maner, *that is to seyn, that yif men mighten thinken and comprehenden the thinges as god seeth hem,* thanne ne sholde ther dwellen outrely no doute: the whiche *resoun and cause of difficultee* I shal assaye at the laste to shewe and to speden, whan I have first y-spended and answered to tho resouns by which thou art y-moeved. For I axe why thou

wenest that thilke resouns of hem that assoilen this questioun ne ben nat speedful y-nough ne sufficient: the whiche *solucioun, or the whiche resoun*, for that it demeth that the prescience nis nat cause of necessitee to thinges to comen, than ne weneth it nat that freedom of wil be destorbed or y-let by prescience. For ne drawestow nat arguments from elles-where of the necessitee of thinges to-comen (*as who seith, any other wey than thus*) but that thilke thinges that the prescience wot biforn ne mowen nat unbityde? *That is to seyn, that they moten bityde.* But thanne, yif that prescience ne putteth no necessitee to thinges to comen, as thou thy-self hast confessed it and biknowen a litel her-biforn, what cause or what is it (*as who seith, ther may no cause be*) by which that the endes voluntarie of thinges mighten be constreined to certein bitydinge? For by grace of positioun, so that thou mowe the betere understonde this that folweth, I pose, *per impossible*, that ther be no prescience. Thanne axe I,' quod she, 'in as mochel as apertieneth to that, sholden thanne thinges that comen of free wil ben constreined to bityden by necessitee?'

Boece. 'Nay,' quod I.

'Thanne ayeinward,' quod she, 'I suppose that ther be prescience, but that it ne putteth no necessitee to thinges; thanne trowe I, that thilke selve freedom of wil shal dwellen al hool and absolut and unbounden. But thou wolt seyn that, al-be-it so that prescience nis nat cause of the necessitee of bitydinge to thinges to comen, algates yit it is a signe that the thinges ben to bityden by necessitee. By this manere thanne, although the prescience ne hadde never y-ben, yit *algate or at the leeste weye* it is certein thing, that the endes and bitydinges of thinges to comen sholden ben necessarie. For every signe sheweth and signifyeth only what the thing is, but it ne maketh nat the thing that it signifyeth. For which it bihoveth first to shewen, that no-thing ne bitydeth that it ne bitydeth by necessitee, so that it may appere that the prescience is signe of this necessitee; or elles, yif ther nere no necessitee, certes, thilke prescience ne mighte nat be signe of thing that nis nat. But certes, it is now certein that the proeve of this, y-sustened by stidefast resoun, ne shal nat ben lad ne proeved by signes ne by arguments y-taken fro without, but by causes covenable and necessarie. But *thou mayst seyn*, how may it be that the thinges ne bityden nat that ben y-purveyed to comen? But, certes, right as we trowen that tho thinges which that the purviance wot biforn to comen ne ben nat to bityden; but that ne sholden we nat demen; but rather, al-thogh that they shal bityden, yit ne have they no necessitee of hir kinde to bityden. And this maystow lightly aperceiven by this that I shal seyn. For we seen many thinges whan they ben don biforn oure eyen, right as men seen the cartere worken in the torninge or atempringe or adressinge of hise cartes or charietes. And by this manere (*as who seith, maystow understonde*) of alle othere *workmen*. Is ther thanne any necessitee, *as who seith, in oure lokinge*, that constreineth or compelleth any of thilke thinges to ben don so?'

Boece. 'Nay,' quod I; 'for in ydel and in veyn were al the effect of craft, yif that alle thinges weren moeved by constreininge;' *that is to seyn, by constreininge of oure eyen or of oure sight.*

Philosophie. 'The thinges thanne,' quod she, 'that, whan men doon hem, ne han no necessitee that men doon hem, eek tho same thinges, first or they ben doon, they ben to comen with-oute necessitee. For-why ther ben somme thinges to bityden, of which the endes and the bitydinges of hem ben absolut and quit of alle necessitee. For certes, I ne trowe nat that any man wolde seyn this: that tho things

that men doon now, that they ne weren to bityden first or they weren y-doon; and thilke same thinges, al-thogh that men had y-wist hem biforn, yit they han free bitydinges. For right as science of thinges present ne bringeth in no necessitee to thinges that men doon, right so the prescience of thinges to comen ne bringeth in no necessitee to thinges to bityden. But thou mayst seyn, that of thilke same it is y-douted, as whether that of thilke thinges that ne han non issues and bitydinges necessaries, yif ther-of may ben any prescience; for certes, they semen to discorden. For thou wenest that, yif that thinges ben y-seyn biforn, that necessitee folweth hem; and yif necessitee faileth hem, they ne mighten nat ben wist biforn, and that no-thing ne may ben comprehended by science but certein; and yif tho thinges that ne han no certein bitydinges ben purveyed as certein, it sholde ben dirknesse of opinioun, nat soothfastnesse of science. And thou wenest that it be diverse fro the hoolnesse of science that any man sholde deme a thing to ben other-weys thanne it is it-self. And the cause of this erroure is, that of alle the thinges that every wight hath y-knowe, they wenen that tho thinges been y-knowe al-oonly by the strengthe and by the nature of the thinges that ben y-wist or y-knowe; and it is al the contrarie. For al that ever is y-knowe, it is rather comprehended and knowen, nat after his strengthe and his nature, but after the facultee, *that is to seyn, the power and the nature*, of hem that knowen. And, for that this thing shal mowen shewen by a short ensaumple: the same roundnesse of a body, otherweys the sighte of the eye knoweth it, and other-weyes the touchinge. The lokinge, by castinge of his bemes, waiteth and seeth from afer al the body to-gidere, with-oute moevinge of it-self; but the touchinge clyveth and conioineth to the rounde body, and moeveth aboute the environinge, and comprehendeth by parties the roundnesse. And the man him-self, other-weys wit biholdeth him, and other-weys imaginacioun, and other-weys resoun, and other-weys intelligence. For the wit comprehendeth withoute-forth the figure of the body of the man that is establissed in the matere subiect; but the imaginacioun comprehendeth only the figure withoute the matere. Resoun surmounteth imaginacioun, and comprehendeth by universal lokinge the comune spece that is in the singuler peces. But the eye of intelligence is heyere; for it surmounteth the environinge of the universitee, and looketh, over that, by pure subtilitee of thoght, thilke same simple forme *of man that is perdurably in the divyne thoght.* In whiche this oughte greetly to ben considered, that the heyeste strengthe to comprehenden thinges enbraseth and contieneth the lowere strengthe; but the lowere strengthe ne aryseth nat in no manere to heyere strengthe. For wit ne may no-thing comprehende out of matere, ne the imaginacioun ne loketh nat the universels speces, ne resoun taketh nat the simple forme *so as intelligence taketh it;* but intelligence, that looketh al aboven, whan it hath comprehended the forme, it knoweth and demeth alle the thinges that ben under that forme. But *she knoweth hem* in thilke manere in the whiche it comprehendeth thilke same simple forme that ne may never ben knowen to none of that other; *that is to seyn, to none of tho three forseide thinges of the sowle.* For it knoweth the universitee of resoun, and the figure of the imaginacioun, and the sensible material *conceived by wit;* ne it ne useth nat nor of resoun ne of imaginacioun ne of wit withoute-forth; but it biholdeth alle thinges, so as I shal seye, by a strok of thought formely, *withoute discours or collacioun.* Certes resoun, whan it looketh any-thing universel, it ne useth nat of imaginacioun, nor of witte, and algates yit it comprehend-

eth the thinges imaginable and sensible; for resoun is she that diffinisseth the universel of hir conseyte right thus: — man is a resonable two-foted beest. And how so that this knowinge is universel, yet nis ther no wight that ne woot wel that a man is a thing imaginable and sensible; and this same considereth wel resoun; but that nis nat by imaginacioun nor by wit, but it looketh it by a resonable concepcioun. Also imaginacioun, al-be-it so that it taketh of wit the beginninges to seen and to formen the figures, algates, al-thogh that wit ne were nat present, yit it environeth and comprehendeth alle thinges sensible; nat by resoun sensible of deminge, but by resoun imaginatif. Seestow nat thanne that alle the thinges, in knowinge, usen more of hir facultee or of hir power than *they doon of the facultee or power* of thinges that ben y-knowe? Ne that nis nat wrong; for so as every Iugement is the dede or doinge of him that demeth, it bihoveth that every wight performe the werk and his entencioun, nat of foreine power, but of his propre power.

METRE IV.

Quondam porticus attulit.

The Porche, *that is to seyn, a gate of the town of Athenes ther-as philosophres hadden hir congregacioun to desputen,* thilke Porche broughte som-tyme olde men, ful derke in hir sentences, *that is to seyn, philosophres that highten Stoiciens,* that wenden that images and sensibilitees, *that is to seyn, sensible imaginacioun or elles imaginacioun of sensible thinges,* weren empreinted in-to sowles fro bodies withoute-forth; *as who seith, that thilke Stoiciens wenden that the sowle hadde ben naked of it-self, as a mirour or a clene parchemin, so that alle figures mosten first comen fro thinges fro withoute-forth in-to sowles, and ben empreinted in-to sowles:* **Text**: right as we ben wont som-tyme, by a swifte pointel, to ficchen lettres empreinted in the smothenesse or in the pleinnesse of the table of wex *or in parchemin* that ne hath no figure ne note in it. **Glose.** *But now argueth Boece ayeins that opiniouu, and seith thus:* But yif the thryvinge sowle ne unpleyteth no-thing, *that is to seyn, ne doth nothing,* by his propre moevinges, but suffreth and lyth subgit to tho figures and to tho notes of bodies withoute forth, and yildeth images ydel and veyn in the manere of a mirour, whennes thryveth thanne or whennes comth thilke knowinge in our sowle, that discerneth and biholdeth alle thinges? And whennes is thilke strengthe that biholdeth the singuler thinges; or whennes is the strengthe that devydeth thinges y-knowe; and thilke strengthe that gadereth togidere the thinges devyded; and the strengthe that cheseth his entrechaunged wey? For som-tyme it heveth up the heved, *that is to seyn, that it heveth up the entencioun to right heye thinges;* and som-tyme it descendeth in-to right lowe thinges. And whan it retorneth in-to him-self, it reproeveth and destroyeth the false thinges by the trewe thinges. Certes, this strengthe is cause more efficient, and mochel more mighty *to seen and to knowe thinges,* than thilke cause that suffreth and receiveth the notes and the figures impressed in maner of matere. Algates the passioun, *that is to seyn, the suffraunce or the wit,* in the quike body, goth biforn, excitinge and moevinge the strengthes of the thought. Right so as whan that cleernesse smyteth the eyen *and moeveth hem to seen,* or right so as vois or soun hurteleth to the eres *and commoeveth hem to herkne,* than is the strengthe of the thought y-moeved and excited, and clepeth forth, to semblable moevinges, the speces that it halt with-inne it-self; and addeth tho speces to the notes and to the thinges withoute-forth, and medleth the images of thinges withoute-forth to tho formes y-hidde with-inne him-self.

Prose V.

Quod si in corporibus sentiendis.

But what yif that in bodies to ben feled, *that is to seyn, in the takinge of knowelechinge of bodily thinges*, and al-be-it so that the qualitees of bodies, that ben obiecte fro withoute-forth, moeven and entalenten the instruments of the wittes; and al-be-it so that the passioun of the body, *that is to seyn, the wit or the suffraunce*, goth to-forn the strengthe of the workinge corage, the which passioun or suffraunce clepeth forth the dede of the thoght in himself, and moeveth and exciteth in this mene whyle the formes that resten withinne-forth; and yif that, in sensible bodies, as I have seyd, our corage nis nat y-taught or empreinted by passioun *to knowe thise thinges*, but demeth and knoweth, of his owne strengthe, the passioun or suffraunce subiect to the body: moche more thanne tho thinges that ben absolut and quite fro alle talents or affecciouns of bodies, *as god or his aungeles*, ne folwen nat in discerninge thinges obiect fro withoute-forth, but they accomplisshen and speden the dede of hir thoght. By this resoun thanne ther comen many maner knowinges to dyverse and differinge substaunces. For the wit of the body, the whiche wit is naked and despoiled of alle other knowinges, thilke wit comth to beestes that ne mowen nat moeven hem-self her and ther, as *oystres and muscules, and other swiche* shelle-fish of the see, that clyven and ben norisshed to roches. But the imaginacioun comth to remuable beestes, that semen to han talent to fleen or to desiren any thing. But resoun is al-only to the linage of mankinde, right as intelligence is only [to] the devyne nature: of which it folweth, that thilke knowinge is more worth than thise othre, sin it knoweth by his propre nature nat only his subiect, *as who seith, it ne knoweth nat al-only that apertieneth properly to his knowinge*, but it knoweth the subiects of alle other knowinges. But how shal it thanne be, yif that wit and imaginacioun stryven ayein resoninge, and seyn, that of thilke universel thing that resoun weneth to seen, that it nis right naught? *For wit and imaginacioun seyn that* that, that is sensible or imaginable, it ne may nat be universel. Thanne is either the Iugement of resoun sooth, ne that ther nis nothing sensible; or elles, for that resoun wot wel that many thinges ben subiect to wit and to imaginacioun, thanne is the concepcioun of resoun veyn and false, which that loketh and comprehendeth that that is sensible and singuler as universel. And yif that resoun wolde answeren ayein to thise two, *that is to seyn, to witte and to imaginacioun*, and seyn, that soothly she hir-self, *that is to seyn, resoun*, loketh and comprehendeth, by resoun of universalitee, bothe that that is sensible and that that is imaginable; and that thilke two, *that is to seyn, wit and imaginacioun*, ne mowen nat strecchen ne enhansen hem-self to the knowinge of universalitee, for that the knowinge of hem ne may exceden ne surmounte the bodily figures: certes, of the knowinge of thinges, men oughten rather yeven credence to the more stedefast and to the more parfit Iugement. In this maner stryvinge thanne, we that han strengthe of resoninge and of imagininge and of wit, *that is to seyn, by resoun and by imaginacioun and by wit*, we sholde rather preyse the cause of resoun; *as who seith, than the cause of wit and of imaginacioun.*

Semblable thing is it, that the resoun of mankinde ne weneth nat that the devyne intelligence bi-holdeth or knoweth thinges to comen, but right as the resoun of mankinde knoweth hem. For thou arguest and seyst thus: that yif it ne seme nat to men that some thinges han certein and necessarie bitydinges, they ne mowen nat ben wist biforn certeinly to bityden. And thanne nis ther no

prescience of thilke thinges; and yif we trowe that prescience be in thise thinges, thanne is ther no-thing that it ne bityideth by necessitee. But certes, yif we mighten han the Iugement of the devyne thoght, as we ben parsoneres of resoun, right so as we han demed that it behoveth that imaginacioun and wit be binethe resoun, right so wolde we demen that it were rightful thing, that mannes resoun oughte to submitten it-self and to ben binethe the divyne thoght. For which, yif that we mowen, *as who seith, that, yif that we mowen, I counseyle, that* we enhanse us in-to the heighte of thilke sovereyn intelligence; for ther shal resoun wel seen that, that it ne may nat biholden in it-self. And certes that is this, in what maner the prescience of god seeth alle thinges certeins and diffinisshed, al-thogh they ne han no certein issues or bitydinges; ne this is non opinioun, but it is rather the simplicitee of the sovereyn science, that nis nat enclosed nor y-shet within none boundes.

Metre V.

Quam uariis terris animalia permeant figuris.

The beestes passen by the erthes by ful diverse figures. For som of hem han hir bodies straught and crepen in the dust, and drawen after hem a tras or a foruh y-continued; *that is to seyn, as nadres or snakes.* And other beestes, by the wandringe lightnesse of hir winges, beten the windes, and over-swimmen the spaces of the longe eyr by moist fleeinge. And other beestes gladen hem-self to diggen hir tras or hir steppes in the erthe with hir goings or with hir feet, and to goon either by the grene feldes, or elles to walken under the wodes. And al-be-it so that thou seest that they alle discorden by diverse formes, algates hir faces, enclined, hevieth hir dulle wittes. Only the linage of man heveth heyeste his heye heved, and stondeth light with his up-right body, and biholdeth the erthes under him. And, but-yif thou, erthely man, wexest yvel out of thy wit, this figure amonesteth thee, that axest the hevene with thy righte visage, and hast areysed thy fore-heved, to beren up a-heigh thy corage; so that thy thoght ne be nat y-hevied ne put lowe under fote, sin that thy body is so heye areysed.

Prose VI.

Quoniam igitur, uti paullo ante.

Therfor thanne, as I have shewed a litel her-biforn, that al thing that is y-wist nis nat knowen by his nature propre, but by the nature of hem that comprehenden it, lat us loke now, in as mochel as it is leveful to us, *as who seith, lat us loke now as we mowen,* which that the estat is of the devyne substaunce; so that we mowen eek knowen what his science is. The commune Iugement of alle creatures resonables thanne is this: that god is eterne. Lat us considere thanne what is eternitte; for certes that shal shewen us to-gidere the devyne nature and the devyne science.

Eternitee, thanne, is parfit possessioun and al-togidere of lyf interminable; and that sheweth more cleerly by the comparisoun or the collacioun of temporel thinges. For al thing that liveth in tyme it is present, and procedeth fro preterits in-to futures, *that is to seyn, fro tyme passed in-to tyme cominge;* ne ther nis no-thing establisshed in tyme that may enbracen to-gider al the space of his lyf. For certes, yit ne hath it taken the tyme of to-morwe, and it hath lost the tyme of yisterday. And certes, in the lyf of this day, ye ne liven no more but right as in the moevable and transitorie moment. Thanne thilke thing that suffreth temporel condicioun, al-thogh that it never bigan to be, ne thogh it never cese for to be, as Aristotle demed of the world, and al-thogh that the lyf of

it be strecched with infinitee of tyme, yit algates nis it no swich thing that men mighten trowen by right that it is eterne. For al-thogh that it comprehende and embrace the space of lyf infinit, yit algates ne embraceth it nat the space of the lyf al-togider; for it ne hath nat the futures that ne ben nat yit, *ne it ne hath no lenger the preterits that ben y-doon or y-passed.* But thilke thing thanne, that hath and comprehendeth togider al the plentee of the lyf interminable, to whom ther ne faileth naught of the future, and to whom ther nis naught of the preterit escaped nor y-passed, thilke same is y-witnessed and y-proeved by right to be eterne. And it bihoveth by necessitee that thilke thing be al-wey present to him-self, and compotent; *as who seith, al-wey present to himself, and so mighty that al be right at his pleasaunce;* and that he have al present the infinitee of the moevable tyme. Wher-for som men trowen wrongfully that, whan they heren that it semede to Plato that this world ne hadde never beginninge of tyme, ne that it never shal han failinge, they wenen in this maner that this world be maked coeterne with his maker; *as who seith, they wene that this world and god ben maked togider eterne, and that is a wrongful weninge.* For other thing is it to ben y-lad by lyf interminable, as Plato graunted to the world, and other thing is it to embrace to-gider al the present of the lyf interminable, the whiche thing it is cleer and manifest that it is propre to the devyne thoght.

Ne it ne sholde nat semen to us, that god is elder thanne thinges that ben y-maked by quantitee of tyme, but rather by the propretee of his simple nature. For this ilke infinit moevinge of temporel thinges folweth this presentarie estat of lyf unmoevable; and so as it ne may nat counfreten it ne feynen it ne be evenlyke to it for the inmoevabletee, *that is to seyn, that is in the eternitee of god,* it faileth and falleth in-to moevinge fro the simplicitee of the presence *of god,* and disencreseth in-to the infinit quantitee of future and of preterit: and so as it ne may nat han to-gider al the plentee of the lyf, algates yit, for as moche as it ne ceseth never for to ben in som maner, it semeth som-del to us, that it folweth and resembleth thilke thing that it ne may nat atayne to ne fulfillen, and bindeth it-self to som maner presence of this litel and swifte moment: the which *presence of this litel and swifte moment,* for that it bereth a maner image or lyknesse of the ay-dwellinge presence *of god,* it graunteth, to swiche maner thinges as it bitydeth to, that it semeth hem as thise thinges *han y-ben, and* ben.

And, for that *the presence of swich litel moment* ne may nat dwelle, therfor it ravisshed and took the infinit wey of tyme, *that is to seyn, by successioun;* and by this maner is it y-doon, for that it sholde continue the lyf in goinge, of the whiche lyf it ne mighte nat enbrace the plentee in dwellinge. And for-thy, yif we wollen putten worthy names to thinges, and folwen Plato, lat us seye thanne soothly, that god is eterne, and the world is perpetuel. Thanne, sin that every Iugement knoweth and comprehendeth by his owne nature thinges that ben subiect un-to him, ther is soothly to god, al-weys, an eterne and presentarie estat; and the science of him, that over-passeth al temporel moevement, dwelleth in the simplicitee of his presence, and embraceth and considereth alle the infinit spaces of tymes, preterits and futures, and loketh, in his simple knowinge, alle thinges *of preterit* right as they weren y-doon presently right now. Yif thou wolt thanne thenken and avyse the prescience, by which it knoweth alle thinges, thou ne shal nat demen it as prescience of thinges to comen, but thou shalt demen it more rightfully that it is science of

presence or of instaunce, that never ne faileth. For which it nis nat y-cleped "prevedence," but it sholde rather ben cleped "purviaunce," that is establisshed ful fer fro right lowe thinges, and biholdeth from a-fer alle thinges, right as it were fro the heye heighte of thinges.

Why axestow thanne, or why deputestow thanne, that thilke thinges ben doon by necessitee whiche that ben y-seyn and knowen by the devyne sighte, sin that, forsothe, men ne maken nat thilke thinges necessarie which that they seen ben y-doon in hir sighte? For addeth thy biholdinge any necessitee to thilke thinges that thou biholdest presente?'

'Nay,' quod I.

Philosophie. 'Certes, thanne, if men mighte maken any digne comparisoun or collacioun of the presence devyne and of the presence of mankinde, right so as ye seen some thinges in this temporel present, right so seeth god alle thinges by his eterne present. Wher-fore this devyne prescience ne chaungeth nat the nature ne the propretee of thinges, but biholdeth swiche thinges present to him-ward as they shullen bityde to yow-ward in tyme to comen. Ne it confoundeth nat the Iugement of thinges; but by o sighte of his thought, he knoweth the thinges to comen, as wel necessarie as nat necessarie. Right so as whan ye seen to-gider a man walken on the erthe and the sonne arysen in the hevene, al-be-it so that ye seen and biholden that oon and that other to-gider, yit natheles ye demen and discernen that that oon is voluntarie and that other necessarie. Right so thanne the devyne lookinge, biholdinge alle thinges under him, ne troubleth nat the qualitee of thinges that ben certeinly present to him-ward; but, as to the condicioun of tyme, forsothe, they ben future. For which it folweth, that this nis noon opinioun, but rather a stedefast knowinge, y-strengthed by soothnesse, that, whanne that god knoweth anything to be, he ne unwot nat that thilke thing wanteth necessitee to be; *this is to seyn, that, whan that god knoweth any thing to bityde, he wot wel that it ne hath no necessitee to bityde.*

And yif thou seyst heer, that thilke thing that god seeth to bityde, it ne may nat unbityde (*as who seith, it mot bityde*), and thilke thing that ne may nat unbityde it mot bityde by necessitee, and that thou streyne me by this name of necessitee: certes, I wol wel confessen and biknowe a thing of ful sad trouthe, but unnethe shal ther any wight mowe *seen it or* come ther-to, but-yif that he be biholder of the devyne thoght. For I wol answeren thee thus: that thilke thing that is future, whan it is referred to the devyne knowinge, thanne is it necessarie; but certes, whan it is understonden in his owne kinde, men seen it is outrely free, and absolut *fro alle necessitee.*

For certes, ther ben two maneres of necessitee. That oon necessitee is simple, as thus: that it bihoveth by necessitee, that alle men be mortal *or deedly.* Another necessitee is conditionel, as thus: yif thou wost that a man walketh, it bihoveth by necessitee that he walke. Thilke thing thanne that any wight hath y-knowe to be, it ne may ben non other weyes thanne he knoweth it to be. But this condicioun ne draweth nat with hir thilke necessitee simple. For certes, this necessitee *conditionel*, the propre nature of it ne maketh it nat, but the adieccioun of the condicioun *maketh it.* For no necessitee ne constreyneth a man to gon, that goth by his propre wil; al-be-it so that, whan he goth, that it is necessarie that he goth. Right on this same maner thanne, yif that the purviaunce of god seeth any thing present, than mot thilke thing ben by necessitee, al-thogh that it ne have no necessitee of his owne nature. But certes, the futures that bityden by freedom of arbitre, god seeth hem alle to-

gider present. Thise thinges thanne, yif they ben referred to the devyne sighte, thanne ben they maked necessarie by the condicioun of the devyne knowinge. But certes, yif thilke thinges be considered by hem-self, they ben absolut *of necessitee*, and ne forleten nat ne cesen nat of the libertee of hir owne nature. Thanne, certes, with-oute doute, alle the thinges shollen ben doon which that god wot biforn that they ben to comen. But som of hem comen and bityden of free arbitre *or of free wille*, that, al-be-it so that they bityden, yit algates ne lese they nat hir propre nature in beinge; by the which first, or that they weren y-doon, they hadden power nat to han bitid.'

Boece. 'What is this to seyn thanne,' quod I, 'that thinges ne ben nat necessarie *by hir propre nature*, so as they comen in alle maneres in the lyknesse of necessitee by the condicioun of the devyne science?'

Philosophie. 'This is the difference,' quod she; 'that tho thinges that I purposede thee a litel heer-biforn, that is to seyn, the sonne arysinge and the man walkinge, that, ther-whyles that thilke thinges been y-doon, they ne mighte nat ben undoon; natheles, that oon of hem, or it was y-doon, it bihoved by necessitee that it was y-doon, but nat that other. Right so *is it here*, that the thinges that god hath present, without doute they shollen been. But som of hem descendeth of the nature of thinges, *as the sonne arysinge;* and som descendeth of the power of the doeres, *as the man walkinge*. Thanne seide I no wrong, that yif these thinges ben referred to the devyne knowinge, thanne ben they necessarie; and yif they ben considered by hem-self, thanne ben they absolut fro the bond of necessitee. Right so as alle thinges that apereth or sheweth to the wittes, yif thou referre it to resoun, it is universel; and yif thou referre it or loke it to it-self, than is it singuler. But now, yif thou seyst thus, that yif it be in my power to chaunge my purpos, than shal I voide the purviaunce *of god*, whan that, peraventure, I shal han chaunged the thinges that he knoweth biforn, thanne shal I answere thee thus. Certes, thou mayst wel chaunge thy purpos; but, for as mochel as the present soothnesse of the devyne purviaunce biholdeth that thou mayst chaunge thy purpos, and whether thou wolt chaunge it or no, and whiderward that thou torne it, thou ne mayst nat eschuen the devyne prescience; right as thou ne mayst nat fleen the sighte of the presente eye, al-though that thou torne thy-self by thy free wil in-to dyverse accidouns. But thou mayst seyn ayein: "How shal it thanne be? Shal nat the devyne science be chaunged by my disposicioun, whan that I wol o thing now, and now another? And thilke prescience, ne semeth it nat to entrechaunge stoundes of knowinge;"' *as who seith, ne shal it nat seme to us, that the devyne prescience entrechaungeth hise dyverse stoundes of knowinge, so that it knowe sum-tyme o thing and sum-tyme the contrarie of that thing?*

'No, forsothe,' *quod I.*

Philosophie. 'For the devyne sighte renneth to-forn and seeth alle futures, and clepeth hem ayein, and retorneth hem to the presence of his propre knowinge; ne he ne entrechaungeth nat, so as thou wenest, the stoundes of forknowinge, as now this, now that; but he ay-dwellinge comth biforn, and embraceth at o strook alle thy mutaciouns. And this presence to comprehenden and to seen alle thinges, god ne hath nat taken it of the bitydinge of thinges to come, but of his propre simplicitee. And her-by is assoiled thilke thing that thou puttest a litel her-biforn, *that is to seyn*, that it is unworthy thing to seyn, that our futures yeven cause of the science of god. For certes, this strengthe of the devyne science, which that embraceth alle thinges by his present-

arie knowinge, establissheth maner to alle thinges, and it ne oweth naught to latter thinges; and sin that these thinges ben thus, *that is to seyn, sin that necessitee nis nat in thinges by the devyne prescience*, than is ther freedom of arbitre, that dwelleth hool and unwemmed to mortal men. Ne the lawes ne purposen nat wikkedly medes and peynes to the willinges of men that ben unbounden and quite of alle necessitee. And god, biholder and for-witer of alle thinges, dwelleth above; and the present eternitee of his sighte renneth alwey with the dyverse qualitee of oure dedes, despensinge and ordeyninge medes to goode men, and torments to wikked men. Ne in ydel ne in veyn ne ben ther nat put in god hope and preyeres, that ne mowen nat ben unspeedful ne with-oute effect, whan they ben rightful.

Withstond thanne and eschue thou vyces; worshipe and love thou virtues; areys thy corage to rightful hopes; yilde thou humble preyeres a-heigh. Gret necessitee of prowesse and vertu is encharged and commaunded to yow, yif ye nil nat dissimulen; sin that ye worken and doon, *that is to seyn, your dedes or your workes*, biforn the eyen of the Iuge that seeth *and demeth* alle thinges.' *To whom be glorye and worshipe by infinit tymes.* AMEN.

TROILUS AND CRISEYDE.

BOOK I.

1. THE double sorwe of Troilus to tellen,
That was the king Priamus sone of Troye,
In lovinge, how his aventures fellen
Fro wo to wele, and after out of Ioye,
My purpos is, er that I parte fro ye.
Thesiphone, thou help me for tendyte
Thise woful vers, that wepen as I wryte!

2. To thee clepe I, thou goddesse of torment,
Thou cruel Furie, sorwing ever in peyne;
Help me, that am the sorwful instrument
That helpeth lovers, as I can, to pleyne!
For wel sit it, the sothe for to seyne,
A woful wight to han a drery fere,
And, to a sorwful tale, a sory chere.

3. For I, that god of Loves servaunts serve,
Ne dar to Love, for myn unlyklinesse,
Preyen for speed, al sholde I therfor sterve,
So fer am I fro his help in derknesse;
But nathelees, if this may doon gladnesse
To any lover, and his cause avayle,
Have he my thank, and myn be this travayle!

4. But ye loveres, that bathen in gladnesse,
If any drope of pitee in yow be,
Remembreth yow on passed hevinesse
That ye han felt, and on the adversitee
Of othere folk, and thenketh how that ye
Han felt that Love dorste yow displese;
Or ye han wonne him with to greet an ese.

5. And preyeth for hem that ben in the cas
Of Troilus, as ye may after here,
That love hem bringe in hevene to solas,
And eek for me preyeth to god so dere,
That I have might to shewe, in som manere,
Swich peyne and wo as Loves folk endure,
In Troilus unsely aventure.

6. And biddeth eek for hem that been despeyred
In love, that never nil recovered be,
And eek for hem that falsly been apeyred
Thorugh wikked tonges, be it he or she;
Thus biddeth god, for his benignitee,
To graunte hem sone out of this world to pace,
That been despeyred out of Loves grace.

7. And biddeth eek for hem that been at ese,
That god hem graunte ay good perseveraunce,
And sende hem might hir ladies so to plese,
That it to Love be worship and plesaunce.
For so hope I my soule best avaunce,

To preye for hem that Loves servaunts be,
And wryte hir wo, and live in charitee.

8. And for to have of hem compassioun
As though I were hir owene brother dere.
Now herkeneth with a gode entencioun,
For now wol I gon streight to my matere,
In whiche ye may the double sorwes here
Of Troilus, in loving of Criseyde,
And how that she forsook him er she deyde.

9. It is wel wist, how that the Grekes stronge
In armes with a thousand shippes wente
To Troyewardes, and the citee longe
Assegeden neigh ten yeer er they stente,
And, in diverse wyse and oon entente,
The ravisshing to wreken of Eleyne,
By Paris doon, they wroughten al hir peyne.

10. Now fil it so, that in the toun ther was
Dwellinge a lord of greet auctoritee,
A gret devyn that cleped was Calkas,
That in science so expert was, that he
Knew wel that Troye sholde destroyed be,
By answere of his god, that highte thus,
Daun Phebus or Apollo Delphicus.

11. So whan this Calkas knew by calculinge,
And eek by answere of this Appollo,
That Grekes sholden swich a peple bringe,
Thorugh which that Troye moste been for-do,
He caste anoon out of the toun to go;
For wel wiste he, by sort, that Troye sholde
Destroyed been, ye, wolde who-so nolde.

12. For which, for to departen softely
Took purpos ful this forknowinge wyse,
And to the Grekes ost ful prively
He stal anoon; and they, in curteys wyse,
Him deden bothe worship and servyse,
In trust that he hath conning hem to rede
In every peril which that is to drede.

13. The noyse up roos, whan it was first aspyed,
Thorugh al the toun, and generally was spoken,
That Calkas traytor fled was, and allyed
With hem of Grece; and casten to ben wroken
On him that falsly hadde his feith so broken;
And seyden, he and al his kin at ones
Ben worthy for to brennen, fel and bones.

14. Now hadde Calkas left, in this meschaunce,
Al unwist of this false and wikked dede,
His doughter, which that was in gret penaunce,
For of hir lyf she was ful sore in drede,
As she that niste what was best to rede;
For bothe a widowe was she, and allone
Of any freend, to whom she dorste hir mone.

15. Criseyde was this lady name a-right;
As to my dome, in al Troyes citee
Nas noon so fair, for passing every wight
So aungellyk was hir natyf beautee,
That lyk a thing inmortal semed she,

As doth an hevenish parfit creature,
That doun were sent in scorning of nature.

16. This lady, which that al-day herde at ere
Hir fadres shame, his falsnesse and tresoun,
Wel nigh out of hir wit for sorwe and fere,
In widewes habit large of samit broun,
On knees she fil biforn Ector a-doun;
With pitous voys, and tendrely wepinge,
His mercy bad, hir-selven excusinge.

17. Now was this Ector pitous of nature,
And saw that she was sorwfully bigoon,
And that she was so fair a creature;
Of his goodnesse he gladed hir anoon,
And seyde, 'lat your fadres treson goon
Forth with mischaunce, and ye yourself, in Ioye,
Dwelleth with us, whyl you good list, in Troye.

18. And al thonour that men may doon yow have,
As ferforth as your fader dwelled here,
Ye shul han, and your body shal men save,
As fer as I may ought enquere or here.'
And she him thonked with ful humble chere,
And ofter wolde, and it hadde ben his wille,
And took hir leve, and hoom, and held hir stille.

19. And in hir hous she abood with swich meynee
As to hir honour nede was to holde;
And whyl she was dwellinge in that citee,
Kepte hir estat, and bothe of yonge and olde
Ful wel beloved, and wel men of hir tolde.

But whether that she children hadde or noon,
I rede it nought; therfore I lete it goon.

20. The thinges fellen, as they doon of werre,
Bitwixen hem of Troye and Grekes ofte;
For som day boughten they of Troye it derre,
And eft the Grekes founden no thing softe
The folk of Troye; and thus fortune on-lofte,
And under eft, gan hem to wheelen bothe
After hir cours, ay whyl they were wrothe.

21. But how this toun com to destruccioun
Ne falleth nought to purpos me to telle;
For it were here a long disgressioun
Fro my matere, and yow to longe dwelle.
But the Troyane gestes, as they felle,
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dyte,
Who-so that can, may rede hem as they wryte.

22. But though that Grekes hem of Troye shetten,
And hir citee bisegede al a-boute,
Hir olde usage wolde they not letten,
As for to honoure hir goddes ful devoute;
But aldermost in honour, out of doute,
They hadde a relik hight Palladion,
That was hir trist a-boven everichon.

23. And so bifel, whan comen was the tyme
Of Aperil, whan clothed is the mede
With newe grene, of lusty Ver the pryme,
And swote smellen floures whyte and rede,
In sondry wyses shewed, as I rede,

The folk of Troye hir observaunces olde,
Palladiones feste for to holde.

24. And to the temple, in al hir beste wyse,
In general, ther wente many a wight,
To herknen of Palladion the servyse;
And namely, so many a lusty knight,
So many a lady fresh and mayden bright,
Ful wel arayed, bothe moste and leste,
Ye, bothe for the seson and the feste.

25. Among thise othere folk was Criseyda,
In widewes habite blak; but nathelees,
Right as our firste lettre is now an A,
In beautee first so stood she, makelees;
Hir godly looking gladede al the prees.
Nas never seyn thing to ben preysed derre,
Nor under cloude blak so bright a sterre

26. As was Criseyde, as folk seyde everichoon
That hir bihelden in hir blake wede;
And yet she stood ful lowe and stille alloon,
Bihinden othere folk, in litel brede,
And neigh the dore, ay under shames drede,
Simple of a-tyr, and debonaire of chere,
With ful assured loking and manere.

27. This Troilus, as he was wont to gyde
His yonge knightes, ladde hem up and doun
In thilke large temple on every syde,
Biholding ay the ladyes of the toun,
Now here, now there, for no devocioun
Hadde he to noon, to reven him his reste,
But gan to preyse and lakken whom him leste.

28. And in his walk ful fast he gan to wayten
If knight or squyer of his companye
Gan for to syke, or lete his eyen bayten
On any woman that he coude aspye;
He wolde smyle, and holden it folye,
And seye him thus, 'god wot, she slepeth softe
For love of thee, whan thou tornest ful ofte!

29. 'I have herd told, pardieux, of your livinge,
Ye lovers, and your lewede observaunces,
And which a labour folk han in winninge
Of love, and, in the keping, which doutaunces;
And whan your preye is lost, wo and penaunces;
O verrey foles! nyce and blinde be ye;
Ther nis not oon can war by other be.'

30. And with that word he gan caste up the browe,
Ascaunces, 'lo! is this nought wysly spoken?'
At which the god of love gan loken rowe
Right for despyt, and shoop for to ben wroken;
He kidde anoon his bowe nas not broken;
For sodeynly he hit him at the fulle;
And yet as proud a pekok can he pulle.

31. O blinde world, O blinde entencioun!
How ofte falleth al theffect contraire
Of surquidrye and foul presumpcioun;
For caught is proud, and caught is debonaire.
This Troilus is clomben on the staire,
And litel weneth that he moot descenden.
But alday fayleth thing that fooles wenden.

32. As proude Bayard ginneth for to skippe
Out of the wey, so priketh him his corn,

Til he a lash have of the longe whippe,
Than thenketh he, 'though I praunce al biforn
First in the trays, ful fat and newe shorn,
Yet am I but an hors, and horses lawe
I moot endure, and with my feres drawe.'

33. So ferde it by this fers and proude knight;
Though he a worthy kinges sone were,
And wende no-thing hadde had swiche might
Ayens his wil that sholde his herte stere,
Yet with a look his herte wex a-fere,
That he, that now was most in pryde above,
Wex sodeynly most subget un-to love.

34. For-thy ensample taketh of this man,
Ye wyse, proude, and worthy folkes alle,
To scornen Love, which that so sone can
The freedom of your hertes to him thralle;
For ever it was, and ever it shal bifalle,
That Love is he that alle thing may binde;
For may no man for-do the lawe of kinde.

35. That this be sooth, hath preved and doth yit;
For this trowe I ye knowen, alle or some,
Men reden not that folk han gretter wit
Than they that han be most with love y-nome;
And strengest folk ben therwith overcome,
The worthiest and grettest of degree;
This was, and is, and yet men shal it see.

36. And trewelich it sit wel to be so;
For alderwysest han ther-with ben plesed;
And they that han ben aldermost in wo,
With love han ben conforted most and esed;
And ofte it hath the cruel herte apesed,
And worthy folk maad worthier of name,
And causeth most to dreden vyce and shame.

37. Now sith it may not goodly be with-stonde,
And is a thing so vertuous in kinde,
Refuseth not to Love for to be bonde,
Sin, as him-selven list, he may yow binde.
The yerde is bet that bowen wole and winde
Than that that brest; and therfor I yow rede
To folwen him that so wel can yow lede.

38. But for to tellen forth in special
As of this kinges sone of which I tolde,
And leten other thing collateral,
Of him thenke I my tale for to holde,
Bothe of his Ioye, and of his cares colde;
And al his werk, as touching this matere,
For I it gan, I wil ther-to refere.

39. With-inne the temple he wente him forth pleyinge,
This Troilus, of every wight aboute,
On this lady and now on that lokinge,
Wher-so she were of toune, or of with-oute:
And up-on cas bifel, that thorugh a route
His eye perced, and so depe it wente,
Til on Criseyde it smoot, and ther it stente.

40. And sodeynly he wex ther-with astoned,

And gan hire bet biholde in thrifty wyse:
'O mercy, god!' thoughte he, 'wher hastow woned,
That art so fair and goodly to devyse?'
Ther-with his herte gan to sprede and ryse,
And softe sighed, lest men mighte him here,
And caughte a-yein his firste pleyinge chere,

41. She nas not with the leste of hir stature,
But alle hir limes so wel answeringe
Weren to womanhode, that creature
Was never lasse mannish in seminge.
And eek the pure wyse of here meninge
Shewed wel, that men might in her gesse
Honour, estat, and wommanly nobilesse.

42. To Troilus right wonder wel withalle
Gan for to lyke hir mening and hir chere,
Which somdel deynous was, for she leet falle
Hir look a lite a-side, in swich manere,
Ascaunces, 'what! may I not stonden here?'
And after that hir loking gan she lighte,
That never thoughte him seen so good a sighte.

43. And of hir look in him ther gan to quiken
So greet desir, and swich affeccioun
That in his hertes botme gan to stiken
Of hir his fixe and depe impressioun:
And though he erst hadde poured up and doun,
He was tho glad his hornes in to shrinke;
Unnethes wiste he how to loke or winke.

44. Lo, he that leet him-selven so konninge,
And scorned hem that loves peynes dryen,
Was ful unwar that love hadde his dwellinge
With-inne the subtile stremes of hir yën;
That sodeynly him thoughte he felte dyen,
Right with hir look, the spirit in his herte;
Blessed be love, that thus can folk converte!

45. She, this in blak, lykinge to Troilus,
Over alle thing he stood for to biholde;
Ne his desir, ne wherfor he stood thus,
He neither chere made, ne worde tolde;
But from a-fer, his maner for to holde,
On other thing his look som-tyme he caste,
And eft on hir, whyl that servyse laste.

46. And after this, not fulliche al awhaped,
Out of the temple al esiliche he wente,
Repentinge him that he hadde ever y-iaped
Of loves folk, lest fully the descente
Of scorn fille on him-self; but, what he mente,
Lest it were wist on any maner syde,
His wo he gan dissimulen and hyde.

47. Whan he was fro the temple thus departed,
He streyght anoon un-to his paleys torneth,
Right with hir look thurgh-shoten and thurgh-darted,
Al feyneth he in lust that he soiorneth;
And al his chere and speche also he borneth;

And ay, of loves servants every whyle,
Him-self to wrye, at hem he gan to smyle.

48. And seyde, 'lord, so ye live al in lest,
Ye loveres! for the conningest of yow,
That serveth most ententiflich and best,
Him tit as often harm ther-of as prow;
Your hyre is quit ayein, ye, god wot how!
Nought wel for wel, but scorn for good servyse;
In feith, your ordre is ruled in good wyse!

49. In noun-certeyn ben alle your observaunces,
But it a sely fewe poyntes be;
Ne no-thing asketh so grete attendaunces
As doth your lay, and that knowe alle ye;
But that is not the worste, as mote I thee;
But, tolde I yow the worste poynt, I leve,
Al seyde I sooth, ye wolden at me greve!

50. But tak this, that ye loveres ofte eschuwe,
Or elles doon of good entencioun,
Ful ofte thy lady wole it misconstrue,
And deme it harm in hir opinioun;
And yet if she, for other enchesoun,
Be wrooth, than shalt thou han a groyn anoon:
Lord! wel is him that may be of yow oon!'

51. But for al this, whan that he say his tyme,
He held his pees, non other bote him gayned;
For love bigan his fetheres so to lyme,
That wel unnethe un-to his folk he feyned
That othere besye nedes him destrayned;
For wo was him, that what to doon he niste,
But bad his folk to goon wher that hem liste.

52. And whan that he in chaumbre was allone,
He doun up-on his beddes feet him sette,
And first he gan to syke, and eft to grone,
And thoughte ay on hir so, with-outen lette,
That, as he sat and wook, his spirit mette
That he hir saw a temple, and al the wyse
Right of hir loke, and gan it newe avyse.

53. Thus gan he make a mirour of his minde,
In which he saugh al hoolly hir figure;
And that he wel coude in his herte finde,
It was to him a right good aventure
To love swich oon, and if he dide his cure
To serven hir, yet mighte he falle in grace,
Or elles, for oon of hir servaunts pace.

54. Imagininge that travaille nor grame
Ne mighte, for so goodly oon, be lorn
As she, ne him for his desir ne shame,
Al were it wist, but in prys and up-born
Of alle lovers wel more than biforn;
Thus argumented he in his ginninge,
Ful unavysed of his wo cominge.

55. Thus took he purpos loves craft to suwe,
And thoughte he wolde werken prively,
First, to hyden his desir in muwe
From every wight y-born, al-outrely,

But he mighte ought recovered be therby;
Remembring him, that love to wyde y-blowe
Yelt bittre fruyt, though swete seed be sowe.

56. And over al this, yet muchel more he thoughte
What for to speke, and what to holden inne,
And what to arten hir to love he soughte,
And on a song anoon-right to biginne,
And gan loude on his sorwe for to winne;
For with good hope he gan fully assente
Criseyde for to love, and nought repente.

57. And of his song nought only the sentence,
As writ myn autour called Lollius,
But pleynly, save our tonges difference,
I dar wel sayn, in al that Troilus
Seyde in his song; lo! every word right thus
As I shal seyn; and who-so list it here,
Lo! next this vers, he may it finden here.

CANTUS TROILI.

58. 'If no love is, O god, what fele I so?
And if love is, what thing and whiche is he?
If love be good, from whennes comth my wo?
If it be wikke, a wonder thinketh me,
Whenne every torment and adversitee
That cometh of him, may to me savory thinke;
For ay thurste I, the more that I it drinke.

59. And if that at myn owene lust I brenne,
Fro whennes cometh my wailing and my pleynte?
If harme agree me, wher-to pleyne I thenne?
I noot, ne why unwery that I feynte.
O quike deeth, o swete harm so queynte,
How may of thee in me swich quantitee,
But-if that I consente that it be?

60. And if that I consente, I wrongfully
Compleyne, y-wis; thus possed to and fro,
Al sterelees with-inne a boot am I
A-mid the see, by-twixen windes two,
That in contrarie stonden ever-mo.
Allas! what is this wonder maladye?
For hete of cold, for cold of hete, I dye.'

61. And to the god of love thus seyde he
With pitous voys, 'O lord, now youres is
My spirit, which that oughte youres be.
Yow thanke I, lord, that han me brought to this;
But whether goddesse or womman, y-wis,
She be, I noot, which that ye do me serve;
But as hir man I wole ay live and sterve.

62. Ye stonden in hire eyen mightily,
As in a place un-to your vertu digne;
Wherfore, lord, if my servyse or I
May lyke yow, so beth to me benigne;
For myn estat royal here I resigne
In-to hir hond, and with ful humble chere
Bicome hir man, as to my lady dere.'

63. In him ne deyned sparen blood royal
The fyr of love, wher-fro god me blesse,
Ne him forbar in no degree, for al
His vertu or his excellent prowesse;
But held him as his thral lowe in distresse,
And brende him so in sondry wyse ay newe,
That sixty tyme a day he loste his hewe.

64. So muche, day by day, his owene thought,
For lust to hir gan quiken and encrese,
That every other charge he sette at nought;
For-thy ful ofte, his hote fyr to cese,
To seen hir goodly look he gan to prese;
For ther-by to ben esed wel he wende,
And ay the ner he was, the more he brende.

65. For ay the ner the fyr, the hotter is,
This, trowe I, knoweth al this compayne.
But were he fer or neer, I dar seye this,
By night or day, for wysdom or folye,
His herte, which that is his brestes yë,
Was ay on hir, that fairer was to sene
Than ever was Eleyne or Polixene.

66. Eek of the day ther passed nought an houre
That to him-self a thousand tyme he seyde,
'Good goodly, to whom serve I and laboure,
As I best can, now wolde god, Criseyde,
Ye wolden on me rewe er that I deyde!
My dere herte, allas! myn hele and hewe
And lyf is lost, but ye wole on me rewe.'

67. Alle othere dredes weren from him fledde,
Bothe of the assege and his savacioun;
Ne in him desyr noon othere fownes bredde
But arguments to this conclusioun,
That she on him wolde han compassioun,
And he to be hir man, whyl he may dure;
Lo, here his lyf, and from the deeth his cure!

68. The sharpe shoures felle of armes preve,
That Ector or his othere bretheren diden,
Ne made him only ther-for ones meve;
And yet was he, wher-so men wente or riden,
Founde oon the best, and lengest tyme abiden
Ther peril was, and dide eek such travayle
In armes, that to thenke it was mervayle.

69. But for non hate he to the Grekes hadde,
Ne also for the rescous of the toun,
Ne made him thus in armes for to madde,
But only, lo, for this conclusioun,
To lyken hir the bet for his renoun;
Fro day to day in armes so he spedde,
That alle the Grekes as the deeth him dredde.

70. And fro this forth tho refte him love his sleep,
And made his mete, his foo; and eek his sorwe
Gan multiplye, that, who-so toke keep,
It shewed in his hewe, bothe eve and morwe;
Therfor a title he gan him for to borwe
Of other syknesse, lest of him men wende
That the hote fyr of love him brende.

71. And seyde, he hadde a fever and ferde amis;
But how it was, certayn, can I not seye,
If that his lady understood not this,
Or feyned hir she niste, oon of the tweye;
But wel I rede that, by no maner weye,
Ne semed it [as] that she of him roughte,
Nor of his peyne, or what-so-ever he thoughte.

72. But than fel to this Troylus such wo,

That he was wel neigh wood; for ay his drede
Was this, that she som wight had loved so,
That never of him she wolde have taken hede;
For whiche him thoughte he felte his herte blede.
Ne of his wo ne dorste he not biginne
To tellen it, for al this world to winne.

73. But whanne he hadde a space fro his care,
Thus to him-self ful ofte he gan to pleyne;
He sayde, 'O fool, now art thou in the snare,
That whilom lapedest at loves peyne;
Now artow hent, now gnaw thyn owene cheyne;
Thou were ay wont eche lovere reprehende
Of thing fro which thou canst thee nat defende.

74. What wole now every lover seyn of thee,
If this be wist, but ever in thyn absence
Laughen in scorn, and seyn, "lo, ther gooth he,
That is the man of so gret sapience,
That held us loveres leest in reverence!
Now, thonked be god, he may goon in the daunce
Of hem that Love list febly for to avaunce!

75. But, O thou woful Troilus, god wolde,
Sin thow most loven thurgh thy destinee,
That thow beset were on swich oon that sholde
Knowe al thy wo, al lakkede hir pitee:
But al so cold in love, towardes thee,
Thy lady is, as frost in winter mone,
And thou fordoon, as snow in fyr is sone."

76. God wolde I were aryved in the port
Of deeth, to which my sorwe wil me lede!
A, lord, to me it were a greet comfort;
Then were I quit of languisshing in drede.
For by myn hidde sorwe y-blowe on brede
I shal bi-laped been a thousand tyme
More than that fool of whos folye men ryme.

77. But now help god, and ye, swete, for whom
I pleyne, y-caught, ye, never wight so faste!
O mercy, dere herte, and help me from
The deeth, for I, whyl that my lyf may laste,
More than my-self wol love yow to my laste.
And with som freendly look gladeth me, swete,
Though never more thing ye me bihete!'

78. This wordes and ful manye an-other to
He spak, and called ever in his compleynte
Hir name, for to tellen hir his wo,
Til neigh that he in salte teres dreynte.
Al was for nought, she herde nought his pleynte;
And whan that he bithoughte on that folye,
A thousand fold his wo gan multiplye.

79. Bi-wayling in his chambre thus allone,
A freend of his, that called was Pandare,
Com ones in unwar, and herde him grone,
And sey his freend in swich distresse and care:
'Allas!' quod he, 'who causeth al this fare?
O mercy, god! what unhap may this mene?

Han now thus sone Grekes maad yow lene?

80. Or hastow som remors of conscience,
And art now falle in som devocioun,
And waylest for thy sinne and thyn offence,
And hast for ferde caught attricioun?
God save hem that bi-seged han our toun,
And so can leye our Iolyte on presse,
And bring our lusty folk to holinesse!'

81. These wordes seyde he for the nones alle,
That with swich thing he mighte him angry maken,
And with an angre don his sorwe falle,
As for the tyme, and his corage awaken;
But wel he wiste, as fer as tonges spaken,
Ther nas a man of gretter hardinesse
Than he, ne more desired worthinesse.

82. 'What cas,' quod Troilus, 'or what aventure
Hath gyded thee to see my languisshinge,
That am refus of every creature?
But for the love of god, at my preyinge,
Go henne a-way, for certes, my deyinge
Wol thee disese, and I mot nedes deye;
Ther-for go wey, ther is no more to seye.

83. But if thou wene I be thus syk for drede,
It is not so, and ther-for scorne nought;
Ther is a-nother thing I take of hede
Wel more than ought the Grekes han y-wrought,
Which cause is of my deeth, for sorwe and thought.
But though that I now telle thee it ne leste,
Be thou nought wrooth, I hyde it for the beste.'

84. This Pandare, that neigh malt for wo and routhe,
Ful often seyde, 'allas! what may this be?
Now freend,' quod he, 'if ever love or trouthe
Hath been, or is, bi-twixen thee and me,
Ne do thou never swiche a crueltee
To hyde fro thy freend so greet a care;
Wostow nought wel that it am I, Pandare?

85. I wole parten with thee al thy peyne,
If it be so I do thee no comfort,
As it is freendes right, sooth for to seyne,
To entreparten wo, as glad desport.
I have, and shal, for trewe or fals report,
In wrong and right y-loved thee al my lyve;
Hyd not thy wo fro me, but telle it blyve.'

86. Than gan this sorwful Troilus to syke,
And seyde him thus, 'god leve it be my beste
To telle it thee; for, sith it may thee lyke,
Yet wole I telle it, though myn herte breste;
And wel wot I thou mayst do me no reste.
But lest thow deme I truste not to thee,
Now herkne, freend, for thus it stant with me.

87. Love, a-yeins the which who-so defendeth
Him-selven most, him alder-lest avayleth,
With desespeir so sorwfully me offendeth,
That streyght un-to the deeth myn herte sayleth.
Ther-to desyr so brenningly me assaylleth,

That to ben slayn it were a gretter Ioye
To me than king of Grece been and Troye!

88. Suffiseth this, my fulle freend Pandare,
That I have seyd, for now wostow my wo;
And for the love of god, my colde care
So hyd it wel, I telle it never to mo;
For harmes mighte folwen, mo than two,
If it were wist; but be thou in gladnesse,
And lat me sterve, unknowe, of my distresse.'

89. 'How hastow thus unkindely and longe
Hid this fro me, thou fool?' quod Pandarus;
'Paraunter thou might after swich oon longe,
That myn avys anoon may helpen us.'
'This were a wonder thing,' quod Troilus,
'Thou coudest never in love thyselven wisse;
How devel maystow bringen me to blisse?'

90. 'Ye, Troilus, now herke,' quod Pandare,
'Though I be nyce; it happeth ofte so,
That oon that exces doth ful yvele fare
By good counseyl can kepe his freend ther-fro.
I have my-self eek seyn a blind man go
Ther-as he fel that coude loke wyde;
A fool may eek a wys man ofte gyde.

91. A whetston is no kerving instrument,
And yet it maketh sharpe kervingtolis.
And ther thow woost that I have ought miswent,
Eschewe thou that, for swich thing to thee scole is;
Thus ofte wyse men ben war by folis.
If thou do so, thy wit is wel biwared;
By his contrarie is every thing declared.

92. For how might ever sweetnesse have be knowe
To him that never tasted bitternesse?
Ne no man may be inly glad, I trowe,
That never was in sorwe or som distresse;
Eek whyt by blak, by shame eek worthinesse,
Ech set by other, more for other semeth;
As men may see; and so the wyse it deemeth.

93. Sith thus of two contraries is a lore,
I, that have in love so ofte assayed
Grevaunces, oughte conne, and wel the more
Counsayllen thee of that thou art amayed.
Eek thee ne oughte nat ben yvel apayed,
Though I desyre with thee for to bere
Thyn hevy charge; it shal the lasse dere.

94. I woot wel that it fareth thus by me
As to thy brother Parys an herdesse,
Which that y-cleped was Oënone,
Wrot in a compleynt of hir hevinesse:
Ye say the lettre that she wroot, y gesse?'
'Nay, never yet, I-wis,' quod Troilus.
'Now,' quod Pandare, 'herkneth; it was thus. —

95. "Phebus, that first fond art of medicyne,"
Quod she, "and coude in every wightes care
Remede and reed, by herbes he knew fyne,
Yet to him-self his conninge was ful bare;
For love hadde him so bounden in a snare,

Al for the doughter of the kinge Admete,
That al his craft ne coude his sorwe bete."—

96. Right so fare I, unhappily for me;
I love oon best, and that me smerteth sore;
And yet, paraunter, can I rede thee,
And not my-self; repreve me no more.
I have no cause, I woot wel, for to sore
As doth an hauk that listeth for to pleye,
But to thyn help yet somwhat can I seye.

97. And of o thing right siker maystow be,
That certayn, for to deyen in the peyne,
That I shal never-mo discoveren thee;
Ne, by my trouthe, I kepe nat restreyne
Thee fro thy love, thogh that it were Eleyne
That is thy brotheres wyf, if ich it wiste;
Be what she be, and love hir as thee liste.

98. Therfore, as freend fullich in me assure,
And tel me plat what is thyn enchesoun,
And final cause of wo that ye endure;
For douteth no-thing, myn entencioun
Nis nought to yow of reprehencioun,
To speke as now, for no wight may bireve
A man to love, til that him list to leve.

99. And witeth wel, that bothe two ben vyces,
Mistrusten alle, or elles alle leve;
But wel I woot, the mene of it no vyce is,
For for to trusten sum wight is a preve
Of trouthe, and for-thy wolde I fayn remeve
Thy wrong conceyte, and do thee som wight triste,
Thy wo to telle; and tel me, if thee liste.

100. The wyse seyth, "wo him that is allone,
For, and he falle, he hath noon help to ryse;"
And sith thou hast a felawe, tel thy mone;
For this nis not, certeyn, the nexte wyse
To winnen love, as techen us the wyse,
To walwe and wepe as Niobe the quene,
Whos teres yet in marbel been y-sene.

101. Lat be thy weping and thy drerinesse,
And lat us lissen wo with other speche;
So may thy woful tyme seme lesse.
Delyte not in wo thy wo to seche,
As doon thise foles that hir sorwes eche
With sorwe, whan they han misaventure,
And listen nought to seche hem other cure.

102. Men seyn, "to wrecche is consolacioun
To have an-other felawe in his peyne;"
That oughte wel ben our opinioun,
For, bothe thou and I, of love we pleyne;
So ful of sorwe am I, soth for to seyne,
That certeynly no more harde grace
May sitte on me, for-why ther is no space.

103. If god wole thou art not agast of me,
Lest I wolde of thy lady thee bigyle,
Thow wost thy-self whom that I love, pardee,

As I best can, gon sithen longe whyle,
And sith thou wost I do it for no wyle,
And sith I am he that thou tristest most,
Tel me sumwhat, sin al my wo thou wost.'

104. Yet Troilus, for al this, no word seyde,
But longe he lay as stille as he ded were;
And after this with sykinge he abreyde,
And to Pandarus voys he lente his ere,
And up his eyen caste he, that in fere
Was Pandarus, lest that in frenesye
He sholde falle, or elles sone dye:

105. And cryde 'awake' ful wonderly and sharpe;
'What? slombrestow as in a lytargye?
Or artow lyk an asse to the harpe,
That hereth soun, whan men the strenges plye,
But in his minde of that no melodye
May sinken, him to glade, for that he
So dul is of his bestialitee?'

106. And with that Pandare of his wordes stente;
But Troïlus yet him no word answerde,
For-why to telle nas not his entente
To never no man, for whom that he so ferde.
For it is seyd, 'man maketh ofte a yerde
With which the maker is him-self y-beten
In sondry maner,' as thise wyse treten,

107. And namely, in his counseyl tellinge
That toucheth love that oughte be secree;
For of him-self it wolde y-nough out-springe,
But-if that it the bet governed be.
Eek som-tyme it is craft to seme flee
Fro thing which in effect men hunte faste;
Al this gan Troilus in his herte caste.

108. But nathelees, whan he had herd him crye
'Awake!' he gan to syke wonder sore,
And seyde, 'freend, though that I stille lye,
I am not deef; now pees, and cry no more;
For I have herd thy wordes and thy lore;
But suffre me my mischef to bi-wayle,
For thy proverbes may me nought avayle.

109. Nor other cure canstow noon for me.
Eek I nil not be cured, I wol deye;
What knowe I of the quene Niobe?
Lat be thyne olde ensaumples, I thee preye.'
'No,' quod tho Pandarus, 'therfore I seye,
Swich is delyt of foles to biwepe
Hir wo, but seken bote they ne kepe.

110. Now knowe I that ther reson in thee fayleth.
But tel me, if I wiste what she were
For whom that thee al this misaunter ayleth?
Dorstestow that I tolde hir in hir ere
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thy-self for fere,
And hir bisoughte on thee to han som routhe?'
'Why, nay,' quod he, 'by god and by my trouthe!'

111. 'What? not as bisily,' quod Pandarus,
'As though myn owene lyf lay on this nede?'
'No, certes, brother,' quod this Troilus.

'And why?'—'For that thou sholdest never spede.'
'Wostow that wel?'—'Ye, that is out of drede,'
Quod Troilus, 'for al that ever ye conne,
She nil to noon swich wrecche as I be wonne.'

112. Quod Pandarus, 'allas! what may this be,
That thou despeyred art thus causelees?
What? liveth not thy lady? *benedicite!*
How wostow so that thou art gracelees?
Swich yvel is not alwey botelees.
Why, put not impossible thus thy cure,
Sin thing to come is ofte in aventure.

113. I graunte wel that thou endurest wo
As sharp as doth he, Ticius, in helle,
Whos stomak foules tyren ever-mo
That highte volturis, as bokes telle.
But I may not endure that thou dwelle
In so unskilful an opinioun
That of thy wo is no curacioun.

114. But ones niltow, for thy coward herte,
And for thyn ire and folish wilfulnesse,
For wantrust, tellen of thy sorwes smerte,
Ne to thyn owene help do bisinesse
As muche as speke a resoun more or lesse,
But lyest as he that list of no-thing recche.
What womman coude love swich a wrecche?

115. What may she demen other of thy deeth,
If thou thus deye, and she not why it is,
But that for fere is yolden up thy breeth,
For Grekes han biseged us, y-wis?
Lord, which a thank than shaltow han of this!
Thus wol she seyn, and al the toun at ones,
"The wrecche is deed, the devel have his bones!"

116. Thou mayst allone here wepe and crye and knele;
But, love a woman that she woot it nought,
And she wol quyte that thou shalt not fele;
Unknowe, unkist, and lost that is un-sought.
What! many a man hath love ful dere y-bought
Twenty winter that his lady wiste,
That never yet his lady mouth he kiste.

117. What? shulde he therfor fallen in despeyr,
Or be recreaunt for his owene tene,
Or sleen him-self, al be his lady fayr?
Nay, nay, but ever in oon be fresh and grene
To serve and love his dere hertes quene,
And thenke it is a guerdoun hir to serve
A thousand-fold more than he can deserve.'

118. And of that word took hede Troilus,
And thoughte anoon what folye he was inne,
And how that sooth him seyde Pandarus,
That for to sleen him-self mighte he not winne,
But bothe doon unmanhod and a sinne,
And of his deeth his lady nought to wyte;
For of his wo, god woot, she knew ful lyte.

119. And with that thought he gan ful sore syke,
And seyde, 'allas! what is me best to do?'
To whom Pandare answerde, 'if thee lyke,
The best is that thou telle me thy wo;
And have my trouthe, but thou it finde so,
I be thy bote, or that it be ful longe,
To peces do me drawe, and sithen honge!'

120. 'Ye, so thou seyst,' quod Troilus tho, 'allas!
But, god wot, it is not the rather so;
Ful hard were it to helpen in this cas,
For wel finde I that Fortune is my fo,
Ne alle the men that ryden conne or go
May of hir cruel wheel the harm withstonde;
For, as hir list, she pleyeth with free and bonde.'

121. Quod Pandarus, 'than blamestow Fortune
For thou art wrooth, ye, now at erst I see;
Wostow nat wel that Fortune is commune
To every maner wight in som degree?
And yet thou hast this comfort, lo, pardee!
That, as hir Ioyes moten over-goon,
So mote hir sorwes passen everichoon.

122. For if hir wheel stinte any-thing to torne,
Than cessed she Fortune anoon to be:
Now, sith hir wheel by no wey may soiorne,
What wostow if hir mutabilitee
Right as thy-selven list, wol doon by thee,
Or that she be not fer fro thyn helpinge?
Paraunter, thou hast cause for to singe!

123. And therfor wostow what I thee beseche?
Lat be thy wo and turning to the grounde;
For who-so list have helping of his leche,
To him bihoveth first unwrye his wounde.
To Cerberus in helle ay be I bounde,
Were it for my suster, al thy sorwe,
By my wil, she sholde al be thyn to-morwe.

124. Loke up, I seye, and tel me what she is
Anoon, that I may goon aboute thy nede;
Knowe ich hir ought? for my love, tel me this;
Than wolde I hopen rather for to spede.'
Tho gan the veyne of Troilus to blede,
For he was hit, and wex al reed for shame;
'A ha!' quod Pandare, 'here biginneth game!'

125. And with that word he gan him for to shake,
And seyde, 'theef, thou shalt hir name telle.'
But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake
As tho men sholde han lad him into helle,
And seyde, 'allas! of al my wo the welle,
Than is my swete fo called Criseyde!'
And wel nigh with the word for fere he deyde.

126. And whan that Pandare herde hir name nevene,
Lord, he was glad, and seyde, 'freend so dere,
Now fare a-right, for Ioves name in hevene,

Love hath biset thee wel, be of good chere;
For of good name and wysdom and manere
She hath y-nough, and eek of gentilesse;
If she be fayr, thow wost thy-self, I gesse.

127. Ne I never saw a more bountevous
Of hir estat, ne a gladder, ne of speche
A freendlier, ne a more gracious
For to do wel, ne lasse hadde nede to seche
What for to doon; and al this bet to eche,
In honour, to as fer as she may strecche,
A kinges herte semeth by hires a wrecche.

128. And for-thy loke of good comfort thou be;
For certeinly, the firste poynt is this
Of noble corage and wel ordeynè,
A man to have pees with him-self, y-wis;
So oughtest thou, for nought but good it is
To loven wel, and in a worthy place;
Thee oughte not to clepe it hap, but grace.

129. And also thenk, and ther-with glade thee,
That sith thy lady vertuous is al,
So folweth it that ther is som pitee
Amonges alle thise othere in general;
And for-thy see that thou, in special,
Requere nought that is ayein hir name;
For vertu streccheth not him-self to shame.

130. But wel is me that ever I was born,
That thou biset art in so good a place;
For by my trouthe, in love I dorste have sworn,
Thee sholde never han tid thus fayr a grace;
And wostow why? for thou were wont to chace
At love in scorn, and for despyt him calle
"Seynt Idiot, lord of thise foles alle."

131. How often hastow maad thy nyce Iapes,
And seyd, that loves servants everichone
Of nycetee ben verray goddes apes;
And some wolde monche hir mete alone,
Ligging a-bedde, and make hem for to grone;
And som, thou seydest, hadde a blaunche fevere,
And preydest god he sholde never kevere!

132. And som of hem toke on hem, for the colde,
More than y-nough, so seydestow ful ofte;
And some han feyned ofte tyme, and tolde
How that they wake, whan they slepen softe;
And thus they wolde han brought hem-self a-lofte,
And nathelees were under at the laste;
Thus seydestow, and Iapedest ful faste.

133. Yet seydestow, that, for the more part,
These loveres wolden speke in general,
And thoughten that it was a siker art,
For fayling, for to assayen over-all.
Now may I iape of thee, if that I shal!
But nathelees, though that I sholde deye,
That thou art noon of tho, that dorste I seye.

134. Now beet thy brest, and sey to god of love,
"Thy grace, lord! for now I me repente
If I mis spak, for now my-self I love:"
Thus sey with al thyn herte in good entente.'
Quod Troilus, 'a! lord! I me consente,
And pray to thee my Iapes thou foryive,
And I shal never-more whyl I live.

135. 'Thow seyst wel,' quod Pandare, 'and now I hope
That thou the goddes wraththe hast al apesed;
And sithen thou hast wepen many a drope,
And seyd swich thing wher-with thy god is plesed,
Now wolde never god but thou were esed;
And think wel, she of whom rist al thy wo
Here-after may thy comfort been al-so.

136. For thilke ground, that bereth the wedes wikke,
Bereth eek thise holsom herbes, as ful ofte
Next the foule netle, rough and thikke,
The rose waxeth swote and smothe and softe;
And next the valey is the hil a-lofte;
And next the derke night the glade morwe;
And also Ioye is next the fyn of sorwe.

137. Now loke that atempre be thy brydel,
And, for the beste, ay suffre to the tyde,
Or elles al our labour is on ydel;
He hasteth wel that wysly can abyde;
Be diligent, and trewe, and ay wel hyde.
Be lusty, free, persevere in thy servyse,
And al is wel, if thou werke in this wyse.

138. But he that parted is in every place
Is no-wher hool, as writen clerkes wyse;
What wonder is, though swich oon have no grace?
Eek wostow how it fareth of som servyse?
As plaunte a tre or herbe, in sondry wyse,
And on the morwe pulle it up as blyve,
No wonder is, though it may never thryve.

139. And sith that god of love hath thee bistowed
In place digne un-to thy worthinesse,
Stond faste, for to good port hastow rowed;
And of thy-self, for any hevinesse,
Hope alwey wel; for, but-if dreri-nesse
Or over-haste our bothe labour shende,
I hope of this to maken a good ende.

140. And wostow why I am the lasse a-fered
Of this matere with my nece trete?
For this have I herd seyd of wyse y-lered,
"Was never man ne woman yet bigete
That was unapt to suffren loves hete
Celestial, or elles love of kinde;"
For-thy som grace I hope in hir to finde.

141. And for to speke of hir in special,
Hir beautee to bithinken and hir youthe,
It sit hir nought to be celestial
As yet, though that hir liste bothe and couthe;

But trewely, it sete hir wel right nouthe
A worthy knight to loven and cheryce,
And but she do, I holde it for a vyce.

142. Wherfore I am, and wol be, ay redy
To peyne me to do yow this servyse;
For bothe yow to plese thus hope I
Her-afterward; for ye beth bothe wyse,
And conne it counseyl kepe in swich a wyse,
That no man shal the wyser of it be;
And so we may be gladed alle three.

143. And, by my trouthe, I have right now of thee
A good conceyt in my wit, as I gesse,
And what it is, I wol now that thou see.
I thenke, sith that love, of his goodnesse,
Hath thee converted out of wikkednesse,
That thou shalt be the beste post, I leve,
Of al his lay, and most his foos to-greve.

144. Ensample why, see now these wyse clerkes,
That erren aldermost a-yein a lawe,
And ben converted from hir wikked werkes
Thorugh grace of god, that list hem to him drawe,
Than arn they folk that han most god in awe,
And strengest-feythed been, I understonde,
And conne an errour alder-best withstonde.'

145. Whan Troilus had herd Pandare assented
To been his help in loving of Criseyde,
Wex of his wo, as who seyth, untormented,
But hotter wex his love, and thus he seyde,
With sobre chere, al-though his herte pleyde,
'Now blisful Venus helpe, er that I sterve,
Of thee, Pandare, I may som thank deserve.

146. But, dere frend, how shal myn wo ben lesse
Til this be doon? and goode, eek tel me this,
How wiltow seyne of me and my destresse?
Lest she be wrooth, this drede I most, y-wis,
Or nil not here or trowen how it is.
Al this drede I, and eek for the manere
Of thee, hir eem, she nil no swich thing here.'

147. Quod Pandarus, 'thou hast a ful gret care
Lest that the cherl may falle out of the mone!
Why, lord! I hate of thee thy nyce fare!
Why, entremete of that thou hast to done!
For goddes love, I bidde thee a bone,
So lat me alone, and it shal be thy beste.'—
'Why, freend,' quod he, 'now do right as thee leste.

148. But herke, Pandare, o word, for I nolde
That thou in me wendest, so greet folye,
That to my lady I desiren sholde
That toucheth harm or any vilenye;
For dredelees, me were lever dye
Than she of me ought elles understode
But that, that mighte sounen in-to gode.'

149. Tho lough this Pandare, and anoon answerde,

'And I thy borw? fy! no wight dooth but so;
I roughte nought though that she stode and herde
How that thou seyst; but fare-wel, I wol go.
A-dieu! be glad! god spede us bothe two!
Yif me this labour and this besinesse,
And of my speed be thyn al that sweetnesse.'

150. Tho Troilus gan doun on knees to falle,
And Pandare in his armes hente faste,
And seyde, 'now, fy on the Grekes alle!
Yet, pardee, god shal helpe us at the laste;
And dredelees, if that my lyf may laste,
And god to-forn, lo, som of hem shal smerte;
And yet me athinketh that this avaunt me asterte!

151. Now, Pandare, I can no more seye,
But thou wys, thou wost, thou mayst, thou art al!
My lyf, my deeth, hool in thyn honde I leye;
Help now,' quod he. 'Yis, by my trouthe, I shal.'
'God yelde thee, freend, and this in special,'
Quod Troilus, 'that thou me recomaunde
To hir that to the deeth me may comaunde.'

152. This Pandarus tho, desirous to serve
His fulle freend, than seyde in this manere,
'Far-wel, and thenk I wol thy thank deserve;
Have here my trouthe, and that thou shalt wel here.' —
And wente his wey, thenking on this matere,
And how he best mighte hir beseche of grace,
And finde a tyme ther-to, and a place.

153. For every wight that hath an hous to founde
Ne renneth nought the werk for to biginne
With rakel hond, but he wol byde a stounde,
And sende his hertes lyne out fro with-inne
Alderfirst his purpos for to winne.
Al this Pandare in his herte thouhgte,
And caste his werk ful wysly, or he wroughte.

154. But Troilus lay tho no lenger doun,
But up anoon up-on his stede bay,
And in the feld he pleyde tho leoun;
Wo was that Greek that with him mette that day.
And in the toun his maner tho forth ay
So goodly was, and gat him so in grace,
That ech him lovede that loked on his face.

155. For he bicom the frendlyeste wight,
The gentileste, and eek the moste free,
The thriftieste and oon the beste knight,
That in his tyme was, or mighte be.
Dede were his Iapes and his cruelltee,
His heighe port and his manere estraunge,
And ech of tho gan for a vertu chaunge.

156. Now lat us stinte of Troilus a stounde,
That fareth lyk a man that hurt is sore,
And is somdel of akinge of his wounde

Y-lissed wel, but heled no del more:
And, as an esy pacient, the lore
Abit of him that gooth aboute his cure;
And thus he dryveth forth his aventure.

Explicit Liber Primus.

BOOK II.

INCIPIT PROHEMIUM SECUNDI LIBRI.

1. OUT of these blake wawes for to sayle,
O wind, O wind, the weder ginneth clere;
For in this see the boot hath swich travayle,
Of my conning that unnethe I it stere:
This see clepe I the tempestous matere
Of desespeyr that Troilus was inne:
But now of hope the calendes biginne.

2. O lady myn, that called art Cleo,
Thou be my speed fro this forth, and my muse,
To ryme wel this book, til I have do;
Me nedeth here noon other art to use.
For-why to every lovere I me excuse,
That of no sentement I this endyte,
But out of Latin in my tonge it wryte.

3. Wherfore I nil have neither thank ne blame
Of al this werk, but pray yow mekely,
Disblameth me, if any word be lame,
For as myn auctor seyde, so seye I.
Eek though I speke of love unfelingly,
No wonder is, for it no-thing of newe is;
A blind man can nat Iuggen wel in hewis.

4. Ye knowe eek, that in forme of speche is chaunge
With-inne a thousand yeer, and wordes tho
That hadden prys, now wonder nyce and straunge
Us thinketh hem; and yet they spake hem so,
And spedde as wel in love as men now do;
Eek for to winne love in sondry ages,
In sondry londes, sondry ben usages.

5. And for-thy if it happe in any wyse,
That here be any lovere in this place
That herkeneth, as the story wol devyse,
How Troilus com to his lady grace,
And thenketh, so nolde I nat love purchace,
Or wondreth on his speche and his doinge,
I noot; but it is me no wonderinge;

6. For every wight which that to Rome went,
Halt nat o path, or alwey o manere;
Eek in some lond were al the gamen shent,
If that they ferde in love as men don here,
As thus, in open doing or in chere,
In visitinge, in forme, or seyde hir sawes;
For-thy men seyn, ech contree hath his lawes.

7. Eek scarsly been ther in this place three
That han in love seyd lyk and doon in al;
For to thy purpos this may lyken thee,
And thee right nought, yet al is seyd or shal;
Eek som men grave in tree, som in stoon wal,
As it bitit; but sin I have begonne,
Myn auctor shal I folwen, if I conne.

Explicit prohemium Secundi Libri.

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

8. In May, that moder is of monthes glade,
That fresshe floures, blewe, and whyte, and rede,
Ben quike agayn, that winter dede made,
And ful of bawme is fletinge every mede;
Whan Phebus doth his brighte bemes sprede
Right in the whyte Bole, it so bitidde
As I shal singe, on Mayes day the thridde,

9. That Pandarus, for al his wyse speche,
Felte eek his part of loves shottes kene,
That, coude he never so wel of loving preche,
It made his hewe a-day ful ofte grene;
So shoop it, that him fil that day a tene
In love, for which in wo to bedde he wente,
And made, er it was day, ful many a wente.

10. The swalwe Proignè, with a sorwful lay,
Whan morwe com, gan make hir weymentinge,
Why she forshapen was; and ever lay
Pandare a-bedde, half in a slomeringe,
Til she so neigh him made hir chiteringe
How Tereus gan forth hir suster take,
That with the noyse of hir he gan a-wake;

11. And gan to calle, and dresse him up to ryse,
Remembringe him his erand was to done
From Troilus, and eek his greet empryse;
And caste and knew in good plyt was the mone
To doon viage, and took his wey ful sone
Un-to his neces paleys ther bi-syde;
Now Ianus, god of entree, thou him gyde!

12. Whan he was come un-to his neces place,
'Wher is my lady?' to hir folk seyde he;
And they him tolde; and he forth in gan pace,
And fond, two othere ladyes sete and she
With-inne a paved parlour; and they three
Herden a mayden reden hem the geste
Of the Sege of Thebes, whyl hem leste.

13. Quod Pandarus, 'ma dame, god yow see,
With al your book and al the companye!'
'Ey, uncle myn, welcome y-wis,' quod she,
And up she roos, and by the hond in hye
She took him faste, and seyde, 'this night thrye,
To goode mote it turne, of yow I mette!'
And with that word she doun on bench him sette.

14. 'Ye, nece, ye shal fare wel the bet,
If god wole, al this yeer,' quod Pandarus;
'But I am sory that I have yow let
To herknen of your book ye preysen thus;
For goddes love, what seith it? tel it us.
Is it of love? O, som good ye me lere!'
'Uncle,' quod she, 'your maistresse is not here!'

15. With that they gonnen laughe, and tho she seyde,
'This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede;
And we han herd how that king Laius deyde

Thurgh Edippus his sone, and al that dede;
And here we stenten at these lettres rede,
How the bisshop, as the book can telle,
Amphiorax, fil thurgh the ground to helle.'

16. Quod Pandarus, 'al this knowe I my-selve,
And al the assege of Thebes and the care;
For her-of been ther maked bokes twelve: —
But lat be this, and tel me how ye fare;
Do wey your barbe, and shew your face bare;
Do wey your book, rys up, and lat us daunce,
And lat us don to May som observaunce.'

17. 'A! god forbede!' quod she, 'be ye mad?
Is that a widewes lyf, so god you save?
By god, ye maken me right sore a-drad,
Ye ben so wilde, it semeth as ye rave!
It sete me wel bet ay in a cave
To bidde, and rede on holy seyntes lyves:
Lat maydens gon to daunce, and yonge wyves.'

18. 'As ever thryve I,' quod this Pandarus,
'Yet coude I telle a thing to doon you pleye.'
'Now uncle dere,' quod she, 'tel it us
For goddes love; is than the assege aweye?
I am of Grekes so ferd that I deye.'
'Nay, nay,' quod he, 'as ever mote I thryve!
It is a thing wel bet than swiche fyve.'

19. 'Ye, holy god!' quod she, 'what thing is that?
What? bet than swiche fyve? ey, nay, y-wis!
For al this world ne can I reden what
It sholde been; som Iape, I trowe, is this;
And but your-selven telle us what it is,
My wit is for to arede it al to lene;
As help me god, I moot nat what ye mene.'

20. 'And I your borow, ne never shal, for me,
This thing be told to yow, as mote I thryve!'
'And why so, uncle myn? why so?' quod she.
'By god,' quod he, 'that wole I telle as blyve;
For prouder womman were ther noon on-lyve,
And ye it wiste, in al the toun of Troye;
I iape nought, as ever have I Ioye!'

21. Tho gan she wondren more than biforn
A thousand fold, and doun hir eyen caste;
For never, sith the tyme that she was born,
To knowe thing desired she so faste;
And with a syk she seyde him at the laste,
'Now, uncle myn, I nil yow nought displese,
Nor axen more, that may do yow disese.'

22. So after this, with many wordes glade,
And freendly tales, and with mery chere,
Of this and that they pleyde, and gunnen wade
In many an unkouth glad and deep matere,
As freendes doon, whan they ben met y-fere;
Til she gan axen him how Ector ferde,
That was the tounes wal and Grekes yerde.

23. 'Ful wel, I thanke it god,' quod Pandarus,
'Save in his arm he hath a litel wounde;
And eek his fresshe brother Troilus,
The wyse worthy Ector the secounde,
In whom that every vertu list abounde,
As alle trouthe and alle gentillesse,
Wysdom, honour, fredom, and worthinesse.'

24. 'In good feith, eem,' quod she, 'that lyketh me;
They faren wel, god save hem bothe two!
For trewely I holde it greet deyntee
A kinges sone in armes wel to do,
And been of good condiciouns ther-to;
For greet power and moral vertu here
Is selde y-seye in o persone y-fere.'

25. 'In good feith, that is sooth,' quod Pandarus;
'But, by my trouthe, the king hath sones tweye,
That is to mene, Ector and Troilus,
That certainly, though that I sholde deye,
They been as voyde of vyces, dar I seye,
As any men that liveth under the sonne,
Hir might is wyde y-knowe, and what they conne.

26. Of Ector nedeth it nought for to telle;
In al this world ther nis a bettre knight
Than he, that is of worthinesse welle;
And he wel more vertu hath than might.
This knoweth many a wys and worthy wight.
The same prys of Troilus I seye,
God help me so, I knowe not swiche tweye.'

27. 'By god,' quod she, 'of Ector that is sooth;
Of Troilus the same thing trowe I;
For dredelees, men tellen that he dooth
In armes day by day so worthily,
And bereth him here at hoom so gentilly
To every wight, that al the prys hath he
Of hem that me were levest preysed be.'

28. 'Ye sey right sooth, y-wis,' quod Pandarus;
'For yesterday, who-so hadde with him been,
He might have wondred up-on Troilus;
For never yet so thikke a swarm of been
Ne fleigh, as Grekes fro him gonne fleen;
And thorugh the feld, in every wightes ere,
Ther nas no cry but "Troilus is there!"

29. Now here, now there, he hunted hem so faste,
Ther nas but Grekes blood; and Troilus,
Now hem he hurte, and hem alle doun he caste;
Ay where he wente it was arayed thus:
He was hir deeth, and sheld and lyf for us;
That as that day ther dorste noon with-stonde,
Whyl that he held his blody swerd in honde.

30. Therto he is the freendlieste man
Of grete estat, that ever I saw my lyve;
And wher him list, best felawshipe can
To suche as him thinketh able for to thryve.'
And with that word tho Pandarus, as blyve,
He took his leve, and seyde, 'I wol go henne:'

'Nay, blame have I, myn uncle,' quod she thenne.

31. 'What eyleth yow to be thus wery sone,
And namelich of wommen? wol ye so?
Nay, sitteth down; by god, I have to done
With yow, to speke of wisdom er ye go.'
And every wight that was a-boute hem tho,
That herde that, gan fer a-wey to stonde,
Whyl they two hadde al that hem liste in honde.

32. Whan that hir tale al brought was to an ende
Of hire estat and of hir governaunce,
Quod Pandarus, 'now is it tyme I wende;
But yet, I seye, aryseth, lat us daunce,
And cast your widwes habit to mis-chaunce:
What list yow thus your-self to dis-figure,
Sith yow is tid thus fair an aven-ture?'

33. 'A! wel bithought! for love of god,' quod she,
'Shal I not witen what ye mene of this?'
'No, this thing axeth layser,' tho quod he,
'And eek me wolde muche greve, y-wis,
If I it tolde, and ye it toke amis.
Yet were it bet my tonge for to stille
Than seye a sooth that were ayeins your wille.

34. For, nece, by the goddesse Minerve,
And Iuppiter, that maketh the thonder ringe,
And by the blisful Venus that I serve,
Ye been the womman in this world livinge,
With-oute paramours, to my witinge,
That I best love, and lothest am to greve,
And that ye witen wel your-self, I leve.'

35. 'Y-wis, myn uncle,' quod she, 'grant mercy;
Your freendship have I founden ever yit;
I am to no man holden trewely
So muche as yow, and have so litel quit;
And, with the grace of god, emforth my wit,
As in my gilt I shal you never offende;
And if I have er this, I wol amende.

36. But, for the love of god, I yow beseche,
As ye ben he that I most love and triste,
Lat be to me your fremde maner speche,
And sey to me, your nece, what yow liste:'
And with that word hir uncle anoon hir kiste,
And seyde, 'gladly, leve nece dere,
Tak it for good that I shal seye yow here.'

37. With that she gan hir eyen doun to caste,
And Pandarus to coghe gan a lyte,
And seyde, 'nece, alwey, lo! to the laste,
How-so it be that som men hem delyte
With subtil art hir tales for to endyte,
Yet for al that, in hir entencioun,
Hir tale is al for som conclusioun.

38. And sithen thende is every tales strengthe,
And this matere is so bihovely,
What sholde I peynte or drawen it on lengthe
To yow, that been my freend so feithfully?'
And with that word he gan right inwardly

Biholden hir, and loken on hir face,
And seyde, 'on suche a mirour goode grace!'

39. Than thoughte he thus, 'if I my tale endyte
Ought hard, or make a proces any whyle,
She shal no savour han ther-in but lyte,
And trowe I wolde hir in my wil bigyle.
For tendre wittes wenen al be wyle
Ther-as they can nat pleynly understonde;
For-thy hir wit to serven wol I fonde'—

40. And loked on hir in a besy wyse,
And she was war that he byheld hir so,
And seyde, 'lord! so faste ye me avyse!
Sey ye me never er now? what sey ye, no?'
'Yes, yes,' quod he, 'and bet wole er I go;
But, by my trouthe, I thoughte now if ye
Be fortunat, for now men shal it see.

41. For to every wight som goodly aventure
Som tyme is shape, if he it can receyven;
And if that he wol tak of it no cure,
Whan that it cometh, but wilfully it weyven,
Lo, neither cas nor fortune him deceyven,
But right his verray slouthe and wrecchednesse;
And swich a wight is for to blame, I gesse.

42. Good aventure, O bele nece, have ye
Ful lightly founden, and ye conne it take;
And, for the love of god, and eek of me,
Cacche it anoon, lest aventure slake.
What sholde I lenger proces of it make?

Yif me your hond, for in this world is noon,
If that you list, a wight so wel begoon.

43. And sith I speke of good entencioun,
As I to yow have told wel herebiforn,
And love as wel your honour and renoun
As creature in al this world y-born;
By alle the othes that I have yow sworn,
And ye be wrooth therfore, or wene I lye,
Ne shal I never seen yow eft with yë.

44. Beth nought agast, ne quaketh nat; wher-to?
Ne chaungeth nat for fere so your hewe;
For hardely, the werste of this is do;
And though my tale as now be to yow newe,
Yet trist alwey, ye shal me finde trewe;
And were it thing that me thoughte unsittinge,
To yow nolde I no swiche tales bringe.'

45. 'Now, my good eem, for goddes love, I preye,'
Quod she, 'com of, and tel me what it is;
For bothe I am agast what ye wol seye,
And eek me longeth it to wite, y-wis.
For whether it be wel or be amis,
Sey on, lat me not in this fere dwelle:'
'So wol I doon, now herkneth, I shal telle:

46. Now, nece myn, the kinges dere sone,
The goode, wyse, worthy, fresshe, and free,
Which alwey for to do wel is his wone,
The noble Troilus, so loveth thee,
That, bot ye helpe, it wol his bane be.
Lo, here is al, what sholde I more seye?

Doth what yow list, to make him live or deye.

47. But if ye lete him deye, I wol sterve;
Have her my trouthe, nece, I nil not lyen;
Al sholde I with this knyf my throte kerve'—
With that the teres braste out of his yën,
And seyde, 'if that ye doon us bothe dyen,
Thus giltelees, than have ye fisshed faire;
What mende ye, though that we bothe apeyre?

48. Allas! he which that is my lord so dere,
That trewe man, that noble gentil knight,
That nought desireth but your freendly chere,
I see him deye, ther he goth upright,
And hasteth him, with al his fulle might,
For to be slayn, if fortune wol assente;
Allas! that god yow swich a beautee sente!

49. If it be so that ye so cruel be,
That of his deeth yow liste nought to recche,
That is so trewe and worthy, as ye see,
No more than of a Iapere or a wrecche,
If ye be swich, your beautee may not strecche
To make amendes of so cruel a dede;
Avysement is good bifore the nede.

50. Wo worth the faire gemme vertulees!
Wo worth that herbe also that dooth no bote!
Wo worth that beautee that is routhelees!
Wo worth that wight that tret ech under fote!
And ye, that been of beautee crop and rote,
If therwith-al in you ther be no routhe,
Than is it harm ye liven, by my trouthe!

51. And also thenk wel, that this is no gaude;
For me were lever, thou and I and he
Were hanged, than I sholde been his baude,
As heyghe, as men mighte on us alle y-see:
I am thyn eem, the shame were to me,
As wel as thee, if that I sholde assente,
Thorugh myn abet, that he thyn honour shente.

52. Now understond, for I yow nought requere,
To binde yow to him thorugh no beheste,
But only that ye make him bettre chere
Than ye han doon er this, and more feste,
So that his lyf be saved, at the leste:
This al and som, and playnly our entente;
God helpe me so, I never other mente.

53. Lo, this request is not but skile, y-wis,
Ne doute of reson, pardee, is ther noon.
I sette the worste that ye dredden this,
Men wolden wondren seen him come or goon:
Ther-ayeins answere I thus a-noon,
That every wight, but he be fool of kinde,
Wol deme it love of freendship in his minde.

54. What? who wol deme, though he see a man

To temple go, that he the images eteth?
Thenk eek how wel and wysly that he can
Governe him-self, that he no-thing foryeteth,
That, wher he cometh, he prys and thank him geteth;
And eek ther-to, he shal come here so selde,
What fors were it though al the toun behelde?

55. Swich love of freendes regneth al this toun;
And wrye yow in that mantel ever-mo;
And, god so wis be my savacioun,
As I have seyd, your heste is to do so.
But alwey, goode nece, to stinte his wo,
So lat your daunger sucred ben a lyte,
That of his deeth ye be nought for to wyte.'

56. Criseyde, which that herde him in this wyse,
Thoughte, 'I shal fele what he meneth, y-wis.'
'Now, eem,' quod she, 'what wolde ye devyse,
What is your reed I sholde doon of this?'
'That is wel seyd,' quod he, 'certayn, best is
That ye him love ayein for his lovinge,
As love for love is skilful guerdoninge.

57. Thenk eek, how elde wasteth every houre
In eche of yow a party of beautee;
And therfore, er that age thee devoure,
Go love, for, olde, ther wol no wight of thee.
Lat this proverbe a lore un-to yow be;
"To late y-war, quod Beautee, whan it paste;"
And elde daunteth daunger at the laste.

58. The kinges fool is woned to cryen loude,
Whan that him thinketh a womman bereth hir hyë,
"So longe mote ye live, and alle proude,
Til crowes feet be growe under your yë,
And sende yow thanne a mirour in to pryë
In whiche ye may see your face a-morwe!"
Nece, I bidde wisshe yow no more sorwe.'

59. With this he stente, and caste adoun the heed,
And she bigan to breste a-wepe anoon.
And seyde, 'allas, for wo! why nere I deed?
For of this world the feith is al agoon!
Allas! what sholden straunge to me doon,
When he, that for my beste freend I wende,
Ret me to love, and sholde it me defende?

60. Allas! I wolde han trusted, doutelees,
That if that I, thurgh my disaventure,
Had loved other him or Achilles,
Ector, or any mannes creature,
Ye nolde han had no mercy ne mesure
On me, but alwey had me in repreve;
This false world, allas! who may it leve?

61. What? is this al the loye and al the feste?
Is this your reed, is this my blisful cas?
Is this the verray mede of your heheste?
Is al this peynted proces seyd, allas!

Right for this fyn? O lady myn, Pallas!
Thou in this dredful cas for me purveye;
For so astonied am I that I deye!'

62. With that she gan ful sorwfully to syke;
'A! may it be no bet?' quod Pandarus;
'By god, I shal no-more com here this wyke,
And god to-forn, that am mistrusted thus;
I see ful wel that ye sette lyte of us,
Or of our deeth! Allas! I woful wrecche!
Mighte he yet live, of me is nought to recche.

63. O cruel god, O dispitouse Marte,
O Furies three of helle, on yow I crye!
So lat me never out of this hous departe,
If that I mente harm or vilanye!
But sith I see my lord mot nedes dye,
And I with him, here I me shryve, and seye
That wikkedly ye doon us bothe deye.

64. But sith it lyketh yow that I be deed,
By Neptunus, that god is of the see,
Fro this forth shal I never eten breed
Til I myn owene herte blood may see;
For certayn, I wole deye as sone as he'—
And up he sterte, and on his wey he raughte,
Til she agayn him by the lappe caughte.

65. Criseyde, which that wel neigh starf for fere,
So as she was the ferfulleste wight
That mighte be, and herde eek with hir ere,
And saw the sorwful ernest of the knight,
And in his preyere eek saw noon unright,
And for the harm that mighte eek fallen more,
She gan to rewe, and dradde hir wonder sore;

66. And thoughte thus, 'unhappes fallen thikke
Alday for love, and in swich maner cas,
As men ben cruel in hem-self and wikke;
And if this man slee here him-self, allas!
In my presence, it wol be no solas.
What men wolde of hit deme I can nat seye;
It nedeth me ful sleyly for to pleye.'

67. And with a sorwful syk she seyde thrye,
'A! lord! what me is tid a sory chaunce!
For myn estat now lyth in Iupartye,
And eek myn emes lyf lyth in balaunce;
But nathelees, with goddes governaunce,
I shal so doon, myn honour shal I kepe,
And eek his lyf;' and stinte for to wepe.

68. 'Of harmes two, the lesse is for to chese;
Yet have I lever maken him good chere
In honour, than myn emes lyf to lese;
Ye seyn, ye no-thing elles me requere?'
'No, wis,' quod he, 'myn owene nece dere.'
'Now wel,' quod she, 'and I wol doon my peyne;
I shal myn herte ayeins my lust constreyne,

69. But that I nil not holden him in honde,
Ne love a man, ne can I not, ne may
Ayeins my wil; but elles wol I fonde,
Myn honour sauf, plese him fro day to day;

Ther-to nolde I nought ones have seyd nay,
But that I dredde, as in my fantasye;
But cesse cause, ay cesseth maladye.

70. And here I make a protestacioun,
That in this proces if ye depper go,
That certaynly, for no savacioun
Of yow, though that ye sterve bothe two,
Though al the world on o day be my fo,
Ne shal I never on him han other routhe.'—
'I graunte wel,' quod Pandare, 'by my trouthe.

71. But may I truste wel ther-to,' quod he,
That, of this thing that ye han hight me here,
Ye wol it holden trewly un-to me?'
'Ye, douteless,' quod she, 'myn uncle dere.'
'Ne that I shal han cause in this matere,'
Quod he, 'to pleyne, or after yow to preche?'
'Why, no, pardee; what nedeth more speche?'

72. Tho fillen they in othere tales glade,
Til at the laste, 'O good eem,' quod she tho,
'For love of god, which that us bothe made,
Tel me how first ye wisten of his wo:
Wot noon of hit but ye?' He seyde, 'no.'
'Can he wel speke of love?' quod she, 'I preye,
Tel me, for I the bet me shal purveye.'

73. Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smyle,
And seyde, 'by my trouthe, I shal yow telle.
This other day, nought gon ful longe whyle,
In-with the paleys-gardyn, by a welle,
Gan he and I wel half a day to dwelle,
Right for to speken of an ordenaunce,
How we the Grekes mighte disavaunce.

74. Sone after that bigonne we to lepe,
And casten with our dartes to and fro,
Til at the laste he seyde, he wolde slepe,
And on the gres a-doun he leyde him tho;
And I after gan rome to and fro
Til that I herde, as that I welk allone,
How he bigan ful wofully to grone.

75. Tho gan I stalke him softely bihinde,
And sikerly, the sothe for to seyne,
As I can clepe ayein now to my minde,
Right thus to Love he gan him for to pleyne;
He seyde, "lord! have routhe up-on my peyne,
Al have I been rebel in myn entente;
Now, *mea culpa*, lord! I me repente.

76. O god, that at thy disposicioun
Ledest the fyn, by Iuste purveyaunce,
Of every wight, my lowe confessioun
Accepte in gree, and send me swich penaunce
As lyketh thee, but from desesperaunce,
That may my goost departe awey fro thee,
Thou be my sheld, for thy benignitee.

77. For certes, lord, so sore hath she me wounded
That stod in blak, with loking of hir yën,
That to myn hertes botme it is y-sounded,
Thorugh which I woot that I not nedes dyen;
This is the worste, I dar me not bi-wryen;
And wel the hotter been the gledes rede,
That men hem wryen with asshen pale and dede."

78. With that he smoot his heed adoun anoon,
And gan to motre, I noot what, trewely.

And I with that gan stille awey to goon,
And leet ther-of as no-thing wist hadde I,
And come ayein anoon and stood him by,
And seyde, "a-wake, ye slepen al to longe;
It semeth nat that love dooth yow longe.

79. That slepen so that no man may yow wake.
Who sey ever or this so dul a man?"
"Ye," freend," quod he, "do ye your hedes ake
For love, and lat me liven as I can."
But though that he for wo was pale and wan,
Yet made he tho as fresh a contenaunce,
As though he shulde have led the newe daunce.

80. This passed forth, til now, this other day,
It fel that I com roming al allone
Into his chaumbre, and fond how that he lay
Up-on his bed; but man so sore grone
Ne herde I never, and what that was his mone,
Ne wiste I nought; for, as I was cominge,
Al sodeynly he lefte his compleyninge.

81. Of which I took somewhat suspecioun,
And neer I com, and fond he wepte sore;
And god so wis be my savacioun,
As never of thing hadde I no routhe more.
For neither with engyn, ne with no lore,
Unethes mighte I fro the deeth him kepe;
That yet fele I myn herte for him wepe.

82. And god wot, never, sith that I was born,
Was I so bisy no man for to preche,
Ne never was to wight so depe y-sworn,
Or he me tolde who mighte been his leche.
But now to yow rehersen al his speche,
Or alle his woful wordes for to soune,
Ne bid me not, but ye wol see me swowne.

83. But for to save his lyf, and elles nought,
And to non harm of yow, thus am I driven;
And for the love of god that us hath wrought,
Swich chere him dooth, that he and I may liven.
Now have I plat to yow myn herte schriven;
And sin ye woot that myn entente is elene,
Tak hede ther-of, for I non yvel mene.

84. And right good thrift, I pray to god, have ye,
That han swich oon y-caught without net;
And be ye wys, as ye ben fair to see,
Wel in the ring than is the ruby set.
Ther were never two so wel y-met,
Whan ye ben his al hool, as he is youre:
Ther mighty god yet graunte us see that houre!'

85. 'Nay, therof spak I not, a, ha!' quod she,
'As helpe me god, ye shenden every deel!'
'O mercy, dere nece,' anoon quod he,
'What-so I spak, I mente nought but weel,
By Mars the god, that helmed is of steel;
Now beth nought wrooth, my blood, my nece dere.'
'Now wel,' quod she, 'foryeven be it here!'

86. With this he took his leve, and hoom he wente;
And lord, how he was glad and wel bigoon!
Criseyde aroos, no lenger she ne stente,
But straught in-to hir closet wente anoon,
And sette here doun as stille as any stoon,
And every word gan up and doun to winde,
That he hadde seyd, as it com hir to minde;

87. And wex somdel astonied in hir thought,
Right for the newe cas; but whan that she
Was ful avysed, tho fond she right nought
Of peril, why she oughte afered be.
For man may love, of possibilitee,
A womman so, his herte may to-breste,
And she nought love ayein, but-if hir leste.

88. But as she sat allone and thoughte thus,
Thascry aroos at skarmish al without,
And men cryde in the strete, 'see, Troilus
Hath right now put to flight the Grekes route!'
With that gan al hir meynee for to shoute,
'A! go we see, caste up the latis wyde;
For thurgh this strete he moot to palays ryde;

89. For other wey is fro the yate noon
Of Dardanus, ther open is the cheyne.'
With that com he and al his folk anoon
An esy pas rydinge, in routes tweyne,
Right as his happy day was, sooth to seyne,
For which, men say, may nought disturbed be
That shal bityden of necessitee.

90. This Troilus sat on his baye stede,
Al armed, save his heed, ful richely,
And wounded was his hors, and gan to blede,
On whiche he rood a pas, ful softely;
But swich a knightly sighte, trewely,
As was on him, was nought, withouten faile,
To loke on Mars, that god is of batayle.

91. So lyk a man of armes and a knight
He was to seen, fulfild of heigh prowesse;
For bothe he hadde a body and a might
To doon that thing, as wel as hardinesse;
And eek to seen him in his gere him dresse,
So fresh, so yong, so weldy semed he,
It was an heven up-on him for to see.

92. His helm to-hewen was in twenty places,
That by a tissew heng, his bak bihinde,
His sheld to-dasshed was with swerdes and maces,
In which men mighte many an arwe finde
That thirled hadde horn and nerf and rinde;
And ay the peple cryde, 'here cometh our Ioye,
And, next his brother, holdere up of Troye!'

93. For which he wex a litel reed for shame,
Whan he the peple up-on him herde cryen,
That to biholde it was a noble game,
How sobreliche he caste doun his yën.
Cryseyda gan al his chere aspyen,

And leet so softe it in hir herte sinke,
That to hir-self she seyde, 'who yaf me drinke?'

94. For of hir owene thought she wex al reed,
Remembringe hir right thus, 'lo, this is he
Which that myn uncle swereth he moot be deed,
But I on him have mercy and pitee;'
And with that thought, for pure a-shamed, she
Gan in hir heed to pulle, and that as faste,
Whyl he and al the peple for-by paste,

95. And gan to caste and rollen up and doun
With-inne hir thought his excellent prowesse,
And his estat and also his renoun,
His wit, his shap, and eek his gentillesse;
But most hir favour was, for his distresse
Was al for hir, and thoughte it was a routhe
To sleen swich oon, if that he mente trouthe.

96. Now mighte som envyous Iangle thus,
'This was a sodeyn love, how mighte it be
That she so lightly lovede Troilus
Right for the firste sighte; ye, par-dee?'
Now who-so seyth so, mote he never thee!
For every thing, a ginning, hath it nede
Er al be wrought, with-outen any drede.

97. For I sey nought that she so sodeynly
Yaf him hir love, but that she gan enclyne
To lyke him first, and I have told yow why;
And after that, his manhod and his pyne
Made love with-inne hir for to myne,
For which, by proces and by good servyse,
He gat hir love, and in no sodeyn wyse.

98. And also blisful Venus, wel arayed,
Sat in hir seventhe hous of hevene tho,
Disposed wel, and with aspectes payed,
To helpen sely Troilus of his wo.
And, sooth to seyn, she nas nat al a fo
To Troilus in his nativitee;
God woot that wel the soner spedde he.

99. Now lat us stinte of Troilus a throwe,
That rydeth forth, and lat us tourne faste
Un-to Criseyde, that heng hir heed ful lowe,
Ther-as she sat allone, and gan to caste
Wher-on she wolde apoynte hir at the laste,
If it so were hir eem ne wolde cesse,
For Troilus, up-on hir for to presse.

100. And, lord! so she gan in hir thought argue
In this matere of which I have yow told,
And what to doon best were, and what eschue,
That plyted she ful ofte in many fold.
Now was hir herte warm, now was it cold,
And what she thoughte somwhat shal I wryte,
As to myn auctor listeth for to endyte.

101. She thoughte wel, that Troilus persone

She knew by sighte and eek his gentillesse,
And thus she seyde, 'al were it nought to done,
To graunte him love, yet, for his worthinesse,
It were honour, with pley and with gladnesse,
In honestee, with swich a lord to dele,
For myne estat, and also for his hele.

102. Eek, wel wot I my kinges sone is he;
And sith he hath to see me swich delyt,
If I wolde utterly his sighte flee,
Paraunter he mighte have me in dispyt,
Thurgh which I mighte stonde in worse plyt;
Now were I wys, me hate to purchace,
With-outen nede, ther I may stonde in grace?

103. In every thing, I woot ther lyth mesure.
For though a man forbede dronkenesse,
He nought for-bet that every creature
Be drinkelees for alwey, as I gesse;
Eek sith I woot for me is his distresse,
I ne oughte not for that thing him despyse,
Sith it is so, he meneth in good wyse.

104. And eek I knowe, of longe tyme agoon,
His thewes goode, and that he is not nyce.
Ne avauntour, seyth men, certein, is he noon;
To wys is he to do so gret a vyce;
Ne als I nel him never so cheryce,
That he may make avaunt, by Iuste cause;
He shal me never binde in swiche a clause.

105. Now set a cas, the hardest is, y-wis,
Men mighten deme that he loveth me:
What dishonour were it un-to me, this?
May I him lette of that? why nay, pardee!
I knowe also, and alday here and see,
Men loven wommen al this toun aboute;
Be they the wers? why, nay, with-outen doute.

106. I thenk eek how he able is for to have
Of all this noble toun the thriftieste,
To been his love, so she hir honour save;
For out and out he is the worthieste,
Save only Ector, which that is the beste.
And yet his lyf al lyth now in my cure,
But swich is love, and eek myn aventure.

107. Ne me 'to love, a wonder is it nought;
For wel wot I my-self, so god me spede.
Al wolde I that noon wistë of this thought,
I am oon the fayreste, out of drede,
And goodlieste, who-so taketh hede;
And so men seyn in al the toun of Troye.
What wonder is it though he of me have Ioye?

108. I am myn owene woman, wel at ese,
I thank it god, as after myn estat;
Right yonge, and stonde unteyd in luste lese,
With-outen Ialousye or swich debat;
Shal noon housbonde seyn to me "chekmat!"

For either they ben ful of Ialousye,
Or maisterful, or loven novelrye.

109. What shal I doon? to what fyn live I thus?
Shal I nat loven, in cas if that me leste?
What, *par dieux!* I am nought religious!
And though that I myn herte sette at reste
Upon this knight, that is the worthieste,
And kepe alwey myn honour and my name,
By alle right, it may do me no shame.'

110. But right as whan the sonne shyneth brighte,
In March, that chaungeth ofte tyme his face,
And that a cloud is put with wind to flighte
Which over-sprat the sonne as for a space,
A cloudy thought gan thorugh hir soule pace,
That over-spradde hir brighte thoughtes alle,
So that for fere almost she gan to falle.

111. That thought was this, 'Allas! sin I am free,
Sholde I now love, and putte in Iupartye
My sikernesse, and thrallen libertee?
Allas! how dorste I thenken that folye?
May I nought wel in other folk aspye
Hir dredful Ioye, hir constreynt, and hir peyne?
Ther loveth noon, that she nath why to pleyne.

112. For love is yet the moste stormy lyf,
Right of him-self, that ever was bigonne;
For ever som mistrust, or nyce stryf,
Ther is in love, som cloud is over the sonne:
Ther-to we wrecched wommen nothing conne,
Whan us is wo, but wepe and sitte and thinke;
Our wreche is this, our owene wo to drinke.

113. Also these wikked tonges been so prest
To speke us harm, eek men be so untrewe,
That, right anoon as cessed is hir lest,
So cesseth love, and forth to love a newe:
But harm y-doon, is doon, who-so it rewe.
For though these men for love hem first to-rende,
Ful sharp biginning breketh ofte at ende.

114. How ofte tyme hath it y-knowen be,
The treson, that to womman hath be do?
To what fyn is swich love, I can nat see,
Or wher bicomth it, whan it is ago;
Ther is no wight that woot, I trowe so,
Wher it bycomth; lo, no wight on it sporneth;
That erst was no-thing, in-to nought it torneth.

115. How bisy, if I love, eek moste I be
To plesen hem that Iangle of love, and demen,
And coye hem, that they sey non harm of me?
For though ther be no cause, yet hem semen
Al be for harm that folk hir freendes quemen;
And who may stoppen every wikked tonge,

Or soun of belles whyl that they be ronge?'

116. And after that, hir thought bigan to clere,
And seyde, 'he which that no-thing under-taketh,
No-thing ne acheveth, be him looth or dere.'
And with an other thought hir herte quaketh;
Than slepeth hope, and after dreed awaketh;
Now hoot, now cold; but thus, bi-twixen tweye,
She rist hir up, and went hir for to pleye.

117. Adoun the steyre anoon-right tho she wente
In-to the gardin, with her neces three,
And up and doun ther made many a wente,
Flexippe, she, Tharbe, and Antigone,
To pleyen, that it Ioye was to see;
And othere of hir wommen, a gret route,
Hir folwede in the gardin al aboute.

118. This yerd was large, and rayled alle the aleyes,
And shadwed wel with blosmy bowes grene,
And benched newe, and sonded alle the weyes,
In which she walketh arm in arm bi-twene;
Til at the laste Antigone the shene
Gan on a Troian song to singe clere
That it an heven was hir voys to here.—

119. She seyde, 'O love, to whom I have and shal
Ben humble subgit, trewe in myn entente,
As I best can, to yow, lord, yeve ich al
For ever-more, myn hertes lust to rente.
For never yet thy grace no wight sente
So blisful cause as me, my lyf to lede
In alle Ioye and seurtee, out of drede.

120. Ye, blisful god, han me so wel beset
In love, y-wis, that al that bereth lyf
Imaginen ne cowde how to ben bet;
For, lord, with-outen Ialousye or stryf,
I love oon which that is most ententyf
To serven wel, unwery or unfeyned,
That ever was, and leest with harm distreyned.

121. As he that is the welle of worthinesse,
Of trouthe ground, mirour of goodliheed,
Of wit Appollo, stoon of sikernesse,
Of vertu rote, of lust findere and heed,
Thurgh which is alle sorwe fro me deed,
Y-wis, I love him best, so doth he me;
Now good thrift have he, wher-so that he be!

122. Whom sholde I thanke but yow, god of love,
Of al this blisse, in which to bathe I ginne?
And thanked be ye, lord, for that I love!
This is the righte lyf that I am inne,
To flemen alle manere vyce and sinne:
This doth me so to vertu for to entende.
That day by day I in my wil amende.

123. And who-so seyth that for to love is vyce,

Or thraldom, though he fele in it distressse,
He outher is envyous, or right nyce,
Or is unmighty, for his shrewednesse,
To loven; for swich maner folk, I gesse,
Defamen love, as no-thing of him knowe;
They speken, but they bente never his bowe.

124. What is the sonne wers, of kinde righte,
Though that a man, for feblesse of his yën,
May nought endure on it to see for brighte?
Or love the wers, though wrecches on it cryen?
No wele is worth, that may no sorwe dryen.
And for-thy, who that hath an heed of verre,
Fro cast of stones war him in the werre!

125. But I with al myn herte and al my might,
As I have seyd, wol love, un-to my laste,
My dere herte, and al myn owene knight,
In which myn herte growen is so faste,
And his in me, that it shal ever laste.
Al dredde I first to love him to biginne,
Now woot I wel, ther is no peril inne.'

126. And of hir song right with that word she stente,
And therwith-al, 'now, nece,' quod Criseyde,
'Who made this song with so good entente?'
Antigone answerde anoon, and seyde,
'Ma dame, y-wis, the goodlieste mayde
Of greet estat in al the toun of Troye;
And let hir lyf in most honour and loye.'

127. 'Forsothe, so it semeth by hir song,'
Quod tho Criseyde, and gan therwith to syke,
And seyde, 'lord, is there swich blisse among
These lovers, as they conne faire endyte?'
'Ye, wis,' quod fresh Antigone the whyte,
'For alle the folk that han or been on lyve
Ne conne wel the blisse of love discryve.

128. But wene ye that every wrecche woot
The parfit blisse of love? why, nay, y-wis;
They wenen al be love, if oon be hoot;
Do wey, do wey, they woot no-thing of this!
Men mosten axe at seyntes if it is
Aught fair in hevene; why? for they conne telle;
And axen fendes, is it foul in helle.'

129. Criseyde un-to that purpos nought answerde,
But seyde, 'y-wis, it wol be night as faste.'
But every word which that she of hir herde,
She gan to prenten in hir herte faste;
And ay gan love hir lasse for to agaste
Than it dide erst, and sinken in hir herte,
That she wex somwhat able to converte.

130. The dayes honour, and the hevenes yë,
The nightes fo, al this clepe I the sonne,

Gan westren faste, and dounward for to wrye,
As he that hadde his dayes cours y-ronne;
And whyte thinges wexen dimme and donne
For lak of light, and sterres for to appere,
That she and al hir folk in wente y-fere. 910

131. So whan it lyked hir to goon to reste,
And voyded weren they that voyden oughte,
She seyde, that to slepe wel hir leste.
Hir wommen sone til hir bed hir broughte.
Whan al was hust, than lay she stille, and thoughte 915
Of al this thing the manere and the wyse.
Reherce it nedeth nought, for ye ben wyse.

132. A nightingale, upon a cedre grene,
Under the chambre-wal ther as she lay,
Ful loude sang ayein the mone shene, 920
Paraunter, in his briddes wyse, a lay
Of love, that made hir herte fresh and gay.
That herkned she so longe in good entente,
Til at the laste the dede sleep hir hente.

133. And, as she sleep, anoon-right tho hir mette. 925
How that an egle, fethered whyt as boon,
Under hir brest his longe clawes sette,
And out hir herte he rente, and that a-noon,
And dide his herte in-to hir brest to goon,
Of which she nought agroos ne nothing smerte, 930
And forth he fleigh, with herte left for herte.

134. Now lat hir slepe, and we our tales holde
Of Troilus, that is to paleys riden,
Fro the scarmuch, of the whiche I tolde,
And in his chambre sit, and hath abiden 935
Til two or three of his messages yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him ful faste,
Til they him founde, and broughte him at the laste.

135. This Pandarus com leping in at ones
And seide thus, 'who hath ben wel y-bete 940
To-day with swerdes, and with slinge-stones,
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete?'
And gan to Iape, and seyde, 'lord, so ye swete!
But rys, and lat us soupe and go to reste;'
And he answerde him, 'do we as thee leste.' 945

136. With al the haste goodly that they mighte,
They spedde hem fro the souper un-to bedde;
And every wight out at the dore him dighte,
And wher him list upon his wey he spedde;
But Troilus, that thoughte his herte bledde 950
For wo, til that he herde som tydinge,
He seyde, 'freend, shal I now wepe or singe?'

137. Quod Pandarus, 'ly stille, and lat me slepe,
And don thyn hood, thy nedes spedde be;
And chese, if thou wolt singe or daunce or lepe; 955

At shorte wordes, thow shalt trowe me. —
Sire, my nece wol do wel by thee,
And love thee best, by god and by my trouthe,
But lak of pursuit make it in thy slouthe.

138. For thus ferforth I have thy work bigonne,
Fro day to day, til this day, by the morwe,
Hir love of freendship have I to thee wonne,
And also hath she leyd hir feyth to borwe.
Algate a foot is hameled of thy sorwe.'
What sholde I lenger sermon of it holde?
As ye han herd bifore, al he him tolde.

139. But right as floures, thorugh the colde of night
Y-closed, stoupen on hir stalkes lowe,
Redressen hem a-yein the sonne bright,
And spreden on hir kinde cours by rowe;
Right so gan tho his eyen up to throwe
This Troilus, and seyde, 'O Venus dere,
Thy might, thy grace, y-heried be it here!'

140. And to Pandare he held up bothe his hondes,
And seyde, 'lord, al thyn be that I have;
For I am hool, al brosten been my bondes;
A thousand Troians who so that me yave,
Eche after other, god so wis me save,
Ne mighte me so gladen; lo, myn herte,
It spredeth so for Ioye, it wol to-sterte!

141. But lord, how shal I doon, how shal I liven?
Whan shal I next my dere herte see?
How shal this longe tyme a-wey be driven,
Til that thou be ayein at hir fro me?
Thou mayst answere, "a-byd, a-byd," but he
That hangeth by the nekke, sooth to seyne,
In grete disese abydeth for the peyne.'

142. 'Al esily, now, for the love of Marte,'
Quod Pandarus, 'for every thing hath tyme;
So longe abyd til that the night departe;
For al so siker as thow lyst here by me,
And god toforn, I wol be there at pryme,
And for thy werk somwhat as I shal seye,
Or on som other wight this charge leye.

143. For pardee, god wot, I have ever yit
Ben redy thee to serve, and to this night
Have I nought fayned, but emforth my wit
Don al thy lust, and shal with al my might.
Do now as I shal seye, and fare a-right;
And if thou nilt, wyte al thy-self thy care,
On me is nought along thyn yvel fare.

144. I woot wel that thow wyser art than I
A thousand fold, but if I were as thou,
God helpe me so, as I wolde outrely,
Right of myn owene hond, wryte hir right now

A lettre, in which I wolde hir tellen how
I ferde amis, and hir beseche of routhe;
Now help thy-self, and leve it not for slouthe.

And I my-self shal ther-with to hir goon;
And whan thou wost that I am with hir there,
Worth thou up-on a courser right anoon,
Ye, hardily, right in thy beste gere,
And ryd forth by the place, as nought ne were,
And thou shalt finde us, if I may, sittinge
At som windowe, in-to the strete lokinge.

And if thee list, than maystow us saluwe,
And up-on me makë thy contenaunce;
But, by thy lyf, be war and faste eschuwe
To tarien ought, god shilde us fro mischaunce!
Ryd forth thy wey, and hold thy governaunce;
And we shal speke of thee somwhat, I trowe,
Whan thou art goon, to do thyne eres glowe!

Touching thy lettre, thou art wys y-nough,
I woot thow nilt it digneliche endyte;
As make it with thise argumentes tough;
Ne scrivenish or craftily thou it wryte;
Beblotte it with thy teres eek a lyte;
And if thou wryte a goodly word al softe,
Though it be good, reherce it not to ofte.

For though the beste harpour upon lyve
Wolde on the beste souned Ioly harpe
That ever was, with alle his fingres fyve,
Touche ay o streng, or ay o werbul harpe,
Were his nayles poynted never so sharpe,
It shulde maken every wight to dulle,
To here is glee, and of his strokes fulle.

Ne Iompre eek no discordaunt thing y-fere,
As thus, to usen termes of phisyk;
In loves termes, hold of thy matere
The forme alwey, and do that it be lyk;
For if a peyntour wolde peynte a pyk
With asses feet, and hede it as an ape,
It cordeth nought; so nere it but a Iape.'

This counseyl lyked wel to Troilus;
But, as a dreedful lover, he seyde this: —
'Allas, my dere brother Pandarus,
I am ashamed for to wryte, y-wis,
Lest of myn innocence I seyde a-mis,
Or that she nolde it for despyt receyve;
Thanne were I deed, there mighte it no-thing weyve.'

To that Pandare answerde, 'if thee lest,
Do that I seye, and lat me ther-with goon;
For by that lord that formed est and west,
I hope of it to bringe answere anoon,
Right of hir hond, and if that thou nilt noon,
Lat be; and sory mote he been his lyve,
Ayeins thy lust that helpeth thee to thryve.'

152. Quod Troilus, '*Depardieux*, I assente;
Sin that thee list, I will aryse and wryte;
And blisful god preye ich, with good entente,
The vyage, and the lettre I shal endyte,
So spede it; and thou, Minerva, the whyte,
Yif thou me wit my lettre to devyse:'
And sette him doun, and wroot right in this wyse.—

153. First he gan hir his righte lady calle,
His hertes lyf, his lust, his sorwes leche,
His blisse, and eek this othere termes alle,
That in swich cas these loveres alle seche;
And in ful humble wyse, as in his speche,
He gan him recomaunde un-to hir grace;
To telle al how, it axeth muchel space.

154. And after this, ful lowly he hir prayde
To be nought wrooth, though he, of his folye,
So hardy was to hir to wryte, and seyde,
That love it made, or elles moste he dye,
And pitously gan mercy for to crye;
And after that he seyde, and ley ful loude,
Him-self was litel worth, and lesse he coude;

155. And that she sholde han his conning excused,
That litel was, and eek he dredde hir so,
And his unworthinesse he ay acused;
And after that, than gan he telle his wo;
But that was endeles, with-outen ho;
And seyde, he wolde in trouthe alwey him hold;—
And radde it over, and gan the lettre folde.

156. And with his salte teres gan he bathe
The ruby in his signet, and it sette
Upon the wex deliverliche and rathe;
Ther-with a thousand tymes, er he lette,
He kiste tho the lettre that he shette,
And seyde, 'lettre, a blisful destenee
Thee shapen is, my lady shal thee see.'

157. This Pandare took the lettre, and that by tyme
A-morwe, and to his neces paleys sterte,
And faste he swoor, that it was passed pryme,
And gan to Iape, and seyde, 'y-wis, myn herte,
So fresh it is, al-though it sore smerte,
I may not slepe never a Mayes morwe;
I have a Ioly wo, a lusty sorwe.'

158. Criseyde, whan that she hir uncle herde,
With dreedful herte, and desirous to here
The cause of his cominge, thus answerde,
'Now by your feyth, myn uncle,' quod she, 'dere,
What maner windes gydeth yow now here?
Tel us your Ioly wo and your penaunce,
How ferforth be ye put in loves daunce.'

159. 'By god,' quod he, 'I hoppe alwey bihinde!'

And she to-laugh, it thoughte hir herte breste.
Quod Pandarus, 'loke alwey that ye finde
Game in myn hood, but herkneth, if yow leste;
Ther is right now come in-to toune a geste,
A Greek espye, and telleth newe thinges,
For which come I to telle yow tydinges.

160. Into the gardin go we, and we shal here,
Al prevely, of this a long sermoun.'
With that they wenten arm in arm y-fere
In-to the gardin from the chaumbre doun.
And whan that he so fer was that the soun
Of that he speke, no man here mighte,
He seyde hir thus, and out the lettre plighte,

161. 'Lo, he that is al hoolly youres free
Him recomaundeth lowly to your grace,
And sent to you this lettre here by me;
Avyseth you on it, whan ye han space,
And of som goodly answere yow purchace;
Or, helpe me god, so pleynly for to seyne,
He may not longe liven for his peyne.'

162. Ful dredfully tho gan she stonde stille,
And took it nought, but al hir humble chere
Gan for to chaunge, and seyde, 'scrit ne bille,
For love of god, that toucheth swich matere,
Ne bring me noon; and also, uncle dere,
To myn estat have more reward, I preye,
Than to his lust; what sholde I more seye?

163. And loketh now if this be resonable,
And letteth nought, for favour ne for slouthe,
To seyn a sooth; now were it covenable
To myn estat, by god, and by your trouthe,
To taken it, or to han of him routhe,
In harming of my-self or in repreve?
Ber it a-yein, for him that ye on leve!'

164. This Pandarus gan on hir for to stare,
And seyde, 'now is this the grettest wonder
That ever I sey! lat be this nyce fare!
To deethe mote I smiten be with thonder,
If, for the citee which that stondeth yonder,
Wolde I a lettre un-to yow bringe or take
To harm of yow; what list yow thus it make?

165. But thus ye faren, well neigh alle and some,
That he that most desireth yow to serve,
Of him ye recche leest wher he bicome,
And whether that he live or elles sterve.
But for al that that ever I may deserve,
Refuse it nought,' quod he, and hente hir faste,
And in hir bosom the lettre doun he thraste,

166. And seyde hir, 'now cast it away anoon,
That folk may seen and gauren on us tweye.'

Quod she, 'I can abyde til they be goon,'
And gan to smyle, and seyde him, 'eem, I preye,
Swich answere as yow list your-self purveye,
For trewely I nil no lettre wryte.'
'No? than wol I,' quod he, 'so ye endyte.'

167. Therwith she lough, and seyde, 'go we dyne.'
And he gan at him-self to iape faste,
And seyde, 'nece, I have so greet a pyne
For love, that every other day I faste'—
And gan his beste Iapes forth to caste;
And made hir so to laughe at his folye,
That she for laughter wende for to dye.

168. And whan that she was comen in-to halle,
'Now, eem,' quod she, 'we wol go dyne anoon;'
And gan some of hir women to hir calle,
And streyght in-to hir chaumbre gan she goon;
But of hir besinesses, this was oon
A-monges othere thinges, out of drede,
Ful prively this lettre for to rede;

169. Avysed word by word in every lyne,
And fond no lak, she thoughte he coude good;
And up it putte and went hir in to dyne.
And Pandarus, that in a study stood,
Er he was war, she took him by the hood,
And seyde, 'ye were caught er that ye wiste;'
'I vouche sauf,' quod he, 'do what yow liste.'

170. Tho wesshen they, and sette hem doun and ete;
And after noon ful sleyly Pandarus
Gan drawe him to the window next the strete,
And seyde, 'nece, who hath arayed thus
The yonder hous, that stant aforyeyn us?'
'Which hous?' quod she, and gan for to biholde,
And knew it wel, and whos it was him tolde,

171. And fillen forth in speche of thinges smale,
And seten in the window bothe tweye.
Whan Pandarus saw tyme un-to his tale,
And saw well that hir folk were alle aweye,
'Now, nece myn, tel on,' quod he, 'I seye,
How lyketh yow the lettre that ye woot?
Can he ther-on? for, by my trouthe, I noot.'

172. Therwith al rosy hewed tho wex she,
And gan to humme, and seyde, 'so I trowe.'
'Aquyte him wel, for goddes love,' quod he;
'My-self to medes wol the lettre sowe,'
And held his hondes up, and sat on knowe,
'Now, goode nece, be it never so lyte,
Yif me the labour, it to sowe and plyte.'

173. 'Ye, for I can so wryte,' quod she tho;
'And eek I noot what I sholde to him seye.'
'Nay, nece,' quod Pandare, 'sey not so;
Yet at the leste thanketh him, I preye,
Of his good wil, and doth him not to deye.

Now for the love of me, my nece dere,
Refuseth not at this tyme my preyere.'

174. '*Depar-dieux*,' quod she, 'god leve al be wel!
God helpe me so, this is the firste lettre
That ever I wroot, ye, al or any del.'
And in-to a closet, for to avyse hir bettre,
She wente allone, and gan hir herte unfettre
Out of disdaynes prison but a lyte;
And sette hir doun, and gan a lettre wryte,

175. Of which to telle in short is myn entente
Theffect, as fer as I can understonde:—
She thonked him of al that he wel mente
Towardes hir, but holden him in honde
She nolde nought ne make hirselven bonde
In love, but as his suster, him to plese,
She wolde fayn, to doon his herte an ese.

176. She shette it, and to Pandarus gan goon,
There as he sat and loked in-to strete,
And doun she sette hir by him on a stoon
Of Iaspre, up-on a quisshin gold y-bete,
And seyde, 'as wisly helpe me god the grete,
I never dide a thing with more peyne
Than wryte this, to which ye me constreyne;'

177. And took it him: he thonked hir and seyde,
'God woot, of thing ful ofte looth bigonne
Cometh ende good; and nece myn, Criseyde,
That ye to him of hard now ben y-wonne
Oughte he be glad, by god and yonder sonne!
For-why men seyth, "impressiounes lighte
Ful lightly been ay redy to the flighte."

178. But ye han pleyed tyraunt neigh to longe,
And hard was it your herte for to grave;
Now stint, that ye no longer on it honge,
Al wolde ye the forme of daunger save;
But hasteth yow to doon him Ioye have;
For trusteth wel, to longe y-doon hardnesse
Causeth despyt ful often, for distresse.'

179. And right as they declamed this matere,
Lo, Troilus, right at the stretes ende,
Com ryding with his tenthe some y-fere,
Al softely, and thiderward gan bende
Ther-as they sete, as was his wey to wende
To paleys-ward; and Pandare him aspyde,
And seyde, 'nece, y-see who cometh here ryde!

180. O flee not in, he seeth us, I suppose;
Lest he may thinke that ye him eschuwe.'
'Nay, nay,' quod she, and wex as reed as rose.
With that he gan hir humbly to saluwe,
With dreedful chere, and ofte his hewes muwe;
And up his look debonairly he caste,

And bekked on Pandare, and forth
he paste. 1260

181. God woot if he sat on his hors
a-right,
Or goodly was beseyn, that ilke
day!
God woot wher he was lyk a manly
knight!
What sholde I drecche, or telle of
his aray?
Criseyde, which that alle these
thinges say, 1265
To telle in short, hir lyked al
y-fere,
His persone, his aray, his look, his
chere,

182. His goodly manere and his gen-
tillesse,
So wel, that never, sith that she
was born,
Ne hadde she swich routhe of his
distresse; 1270
And how-so she hath hard ben
her-biforn,
To god hope I, she hath now
caught a thorn.
She shal not pulle it out this nexte
wyke;
God sende mo swich thornes on to
pyke!

183. Pandare, which that stood hir faste
by, 1275
Felte iren hoot, and he bigan to
smyte,
And seyde, 'nece, I pray yow
hertely,
Tel me that I shal axen yow a lyte.
A womman, that were of his deeth
to wyte,
With-outen his gilt, but for hir
lakked routhe, 1280
Were it wel doon?' Quod she,
'nay, by my trouthe!'

184. 'God helpe me so,' quod he, 'ye
sey me sooth.
Ye felen wel your-self that I not
lye;
Lo, yond he rit!' Quod she, 'ye,
so he dooth.'
'Wel,' quod Pandare, 'as I have
told yow thrye, 1285
Lat be your nyce shame and your
folye,
And spek with him in esing of his
herte;
Lat nycetee not do yow bothe
smerte.'

185. But ther-on was to heven and to
done;
Considered al thing, it may not
be; 1290
And why, for shame; and it were
eek to sone
To graunten him so greet a lib-
ertee.
'For playnly hir entente,' as seyde
she,
'Was for to love him unwist, if she
mighte,
And guerdon him with no-thing
but with sighte.' 1295

186. But Pandarus thoughte, 'it shal
not be so,
If that I may; this nyce opin-
ioun
Shal not be holden fully yeres
two.'
What sholde I make of this a long
sermoun?
He moste assente on that con-
clusioun 1300
As for the tyme; and whan that
it was eve,
And al was wel, he roos and took
his leve.

187. And on his wey ful faste homward
he spedde,
And right for Ioye he felte his
herte daunce;
And Troilus he fond alone a-
bedde, 1305
That lay as dooth these loveres,
in a traunce,
Bitwixen hope and derk desesper-
aunce.
But Pandarus, right at his in-com-
inge,
He song, as who seyth, 'lo! sum-
what I bringe.'

188. And seyde, 'who is in his bed so sone
Y-buried thus?' 'It am I, freend,' quod he.
'Who, Troilus? nay helpe me so the mone,'
Quod Pandarus, 'thou shalt aryse and see
A charme that was sent right now to thee,
The which can helen thee of thyn accesse,
If thou do forth-with al thy besinesse.'

189. 'Ye, through the might of god!' quod Troilus.
And Pandarus gan him the lettre take,
And seyde, 'pardee, god hath holpen us;
Have here a light, and loke on al this blake.'
But ofte gan the herte glade and quake
Of Troilus, whyl that he gan it rede,
So as the wordes yave him hope or drede.

190. But fynally, he took al for the beste
That she him wroot, for sumwhat he biheld
On which, him thoughte, he mighte his herte reste,
Al covered she the wordes under sheld.
Thus to the more worthy part he held,
That, what for hope and Pandarus biheste,
His grete wo for-yede he at the leste.

191. But as we may alday our-selven see,
Through more wode or col, the more fyr;
Right so encrees of hope, of what it be,
Therwith ful ofte encreseth eek desyr;
Or, as an ook cometh of a litel spyr,
So through this lettre, which that she him sente,
Encresen gan desyr, of which he brente.

192. Wherfore I seye alwey, that day and night
This Troilus gan to desiren more
Than he dide erst, thurgh hope, and dide his might
To pressen on, as by Pandarus lore,
And wryten to hir of his sorwes sore
Fro day to day; he leet it not refreyde,
That by Pandare he wroot somwhat or seyde;

193. And dide also his othere observaunces
That to a lovere longeth in this cas;
And, after that these dees turnede on chaunces,
So was he outher glad or seyde 'allas!'
And held after his gestes ay his pas;
And aftir swiche answeres as he hadde,
So were his dayes sory outher gladde.

194. But to Pandare alwey was his recours,
And pitously gan ay til him to pleyne.
And him bisoughte of rede and som socours;
And Pandarus, that sey his wode peyne,
Wex wel neigh deed for routhe, sooth to seyne,
And bisily with al his herte caste
Som of his wo to sleen, and that as faste;

195. And seyde, 'lord, and freend, and brother dere,
God woot that thy disese dooth me wo.

But woltow stinten al this woful chere,
And, by my trouthe, or it be dayes two,
And god to-forn, yet shal I shape it so,
That thou shalt come in-to a certayn place,
Ther-as thou mayst thy-self hir preye of grace.

196. And certainly, I noot if thou it wost,
But tho that been expert in love it seye,
It is oon of the thinges that further-eth most,
A man to have a leyser for to preye,
And siker place his wo for to biwreye;
For in good herte it moot som routhe impresse,
To here and see the giltles in distresse.

197. Paraunter thenkestow: though it be so
That kinde wolde doon hir to biginne
To han a maner routhe up-on my wo,
Seyth Daunger, "Nay, thou shalt me never winne;
So reuleth hir hir hertes goost with-inne,
That, though she bende, yet she stant on rote;
What in effect is this un-to my bote?"

198. Thenk here-ayeins, whan that the sturdy ook,
On which men hakketh ofte, for the nones,
Receyved hath the happy falling strook,
The grete sweigh doth it come al at ones
As doon these rokkes or these milne-stones.
For swifter cours cometh thing that is of wighte,
Whan it descendeth, than don thinges lighte.

199. And reed that boweth doun for every blast,
Ful lightly, cesse wind, it wol aryse;
But so nil not an ook whan it is cast;
It nedeth me nought thee longe to forbyse.
Men shal reioysen of a greet empryse
Acheved wel, and stant with-outen doute,
Al han men been the lenger ther-aboute.

200. But, Troilus, yet tel me, if thee lest,
A thing now which that I shal axen thee;
Which is thy brother that thou lovest best
As in thy verray hertes privetee?'
'Y-wis, my brother Deiphebus,' quod he.
'Now,' quod Pandare, 'er houres twyes twelve,
He shal thee ese, unwist of it him-selve.

201. Now lat me allone, and werken as I may,'
Quod he; and to Deiphebus wente he tho
Which hadde his lord and grete freend ben ay;
Save Troilus, no man he lovede so.
To telle in short, with-outen wordes mo,
Quod Pandarus, 'I pray yow that ye be
Freend to a cause which that toucheth me.'

202. 'Yis, pardee,' quod Deiphebus, 'wel thow wost,
In al that ever I may, and god to-fore,
Al nere it but for man I love most,
My brother Troilus; but sey wher-fore

It is; for sith that day that I was bore,
I nas, ne never-mo to been I thinke,
Ayeins a thing that mighte thee for-thinke.'

203. Pandare gan him thonke, and to him seyde,
'Lo, sire, I have a lady in this toun,
That is my neece, and called is Criseyde,
Which som men wolden doon oppressioun,
And wrongfully have hir possessioun:
Wherfor I of your lordship yow biseche
To been our freend, with-oute more speche.'

204. Deiphebus him answerde, 'O, is not this,
That thow spekest of to me thus straungely,
Criseyda, my freend?' He seyde, 'Yis.'
'Than nedeth,' quod Deiphebus hardely,
Na-more to speke, for trusteth wel, that I
Wol be hir champioun with spore and yerde;
I roughte nought though alle hir foos it herd.

205. But tel me, thou that woost al this matere,
How I might best avaylen? now lat see.'
Quod Pandarus, 'if ye, my lord so dere,
Wolden as now don this honour to me,
To prayen hir to-morwe, lo, that she
Come un-to yow hir pleyntes to devyse,
Hir adversaries wolde of hit agryse.

206. And if I more dorste preye as now,
And chargen yow to have so greet travayle,
To han som of your bretheren here with yow,
That mighten to hir cause bet avayle,
Than, woot I wel, she mighte never fayle
For to be holpen, what at your instaunce,
What with hir othere freendes governaunce.'

207. Deiphebus, which that comen was, of kinde,
To al honour and bountee to consente,
Answerde, 'it shal be doon; and I can finde
Yet gretter help to this in myn entente.
What wolt thow seyn, if I for Eleyne sente
To speke of this? I trowe it be the beste;
For she may leden Paris as hir leste.

208. Of Ector, which that is my lord, my brother,
It nedeth naught to preye him freend to be;
For I have herd him, o tyme and eek other,
Speke of Criseyde swich honour, that he
May seyn no bet, swich hap to him hath she.
It nedeth nought his helpes for to crave;
He shal be swich, right as we wole have.

209. Spek thou thy-self also to Troilus
On my bihalve, and pray him with us dyne.'
'Sire, al this shal be doon,' quod Pandarus;
And took his leve, and never gan to fyne,
But to his neces hous, as streght as lyne,
He com; and fond hir fro the mete aryse;

And sette him doun, and spak right in this wyse.

210. He seyde, 'O veray god, so have I ronne!
Lo, nece myn, see ye nought how I swete?
I noot whether ye the more thank me conne.
Be ye nought war how that fals Poliphete
Is now aboute eft-sones for to plete,
And bringe on yow advocacyës newe?'
'I? no,' quod she, and chaunged al hir hewe.

211. 'What is he more aboute, me to drecche
And doon me wrong? what shal I do, allas?
Yet of him-self no-thing ne wolde I recche,
Nere it for Antenor and Eneas,
That been his freendes in swich maner cas;
But, for the love of god, myn uncle dere,
No fors of that, lat him have al y-fere;

212. With-outen that, I have ynough for us.'
'Nay,' quod Pandare, 'it shal no-thing be so.
For I have been right now at Deiphebus,
And Ector, and myne othere lordes mo,
And shortly maked eche of hem his fo;
That, by my thrift, he shal it never winne
For ought he can, whan that so he biginne.'

213. And as they casten what was best to done,
Deiphebus, of his owene curtasye,
Com hir to preye, in his propre persone,
To holde him on the morwe companye
At diner, which she nolde not denye,
But goodly gan to his preyere obeye.
He thonked hir, and wente up-on his weye.

214. Whanne this was doon, this Pandare up a-noon,
To telle in short, and forth gan for to wende
To Troilus, as stille as any stoon,
And al this thing he tolde him, word and ende;
And how that he Deiphebus gan to blende;
And seyde him, 'now is tyme, if that thou conne,
To bere thee wel to-morwe, and al is wonne.

215. Now spek, now prey, now pitously compleyne;
Lat not for nyce shame, or drede, or slouthe;
Som-tyme a man mot telle his owene peyne;
Bileve it, and she shal han on thee routhe;
Thou shalt be saved by thy feyth, in trouthe.
But wel wot I, thou art now in a drede;
And what it is, I leye, I can arede.

216. Thow thinkest now, "how sholde I doon al this?
For by my cheres mosten folk aspye,
That for hir love is that I fare a-mis;
Yet hadde I lever unwist for sorwe dye."
Now thenk not so, for thou dost greet folye.
For right now have I founden o manere
Of sleighte, for to coveren al thy chere.

217. Thow shalt gon over night, and that as blyve,

Un-to Deiphebus hous, as thee to pleye,
Thy maladye a-wey the bet to dryve,
For-why thou semest syk, soth for to seye.
Sone after that, doun in thy bed thee leye,
And sey, thow mayst no lenger up endure,
And lye right there, and byde thyn aventure.

218. Sey that thy fever is wont thee for to take
The same tyme, and lasten til a-morwe;
And lat see now how wel thou canst it make,
For, par-dee, syk is he that is in sorwe.
Go now, farewel! and, Venus here to borwe,
I hope, and thou this purpos holde ferme,
Thy grace she shal fully ther conferme.'

219. Quod Troilus, 'y-wis, thou nedelees
Counseylest me, that sykliche I me feyne!
For I am syk in ernest, doutelees,
So that wel neigh I sterve for the peyne.'
Quod Pandarus, 'thou shalt the bettre pleyne,
And hast the lasse nede to countrefete;
For him men demen hoot that men seen swete.

220. Lo, holde thee at thy triste cloos, and I
Shal wel the deer un-to thy bowe dryve.'
Therwith he took his leve al softely,
And Troilus to paleys wente blyve.
So glad ne was he never in al his lyve;
And to Pandarus reed gan al assente,
And to Deiphebus hous at night he wente.

221. What nedeth yow to tellen al the chere
That Deiphebus un-to his brother made,
Or his accesse, or his syklych manere,
How men gan him with clothes for to lade,
Whan he was leyd, and how men wolde him glade?
But al for nought, he held forth ay the wyse
That ye han herd Pandare er this devyse.

222. But certeyn is, er Troilus him leyde,
Deiphebus had him prayed, over night,
To been a freend and helping to Criseyde.
God woot, that he it grauntede anon-right,
To been hir fulle freend with al his might.
But swich a nede was to preye him thenne,
As for to bidde a wood man for to renne.

223. The morwen com, and neighen gan the tyme
Of meel-tyd, that the faire quene Eleyne
Shoop hir to been, an houre after the pryme,
With Deiphebus, to whom she nolde feyne;
But as his suster, hoomly, sooth to seyne,
She com to diner in hir playn entente.
But god and Pandare wiste al what this mente.

224. Come eek Criseyde, al innocent of this,
Antigone, hir sister Tarbe also;
But flee we now prolixitee best is,
For love of god, and lat us faste go
Right to the effect, with-oute tales mo,

Why al this folk assembled in this place;
And lat us of hir saluinges pace.

225. Gret honour dide hem Deiphebus, certeyn,
And fedde hem wel with al that mighte lyke.
But ever-more, 'allas!' was his refreyn,
'My goode brother Troilus, the syke,
Lyth yet'—and therwith-al he gan to syke;
And after that, he peyned him to glade
Hem as he mighte, and chere good he made.

226. Compleyned eek Eleyne of his syknesse
So feithfully, that pitee was to here,
And every wight gan waxen for accesse
A leche anoon, and seyde, 'in this manere
Men curen folk; this charme I wol yow lere.'
But there sat oon, al list hir nought to teche,
That thoughte, best coude I yet been his leche.

227. After compleynt, him gonnen they to preyse,
As folk don yet, whan som wight hath bigonne
To preyse a man, and up with prys him reyse
A thousand fold yet hyer than the sonne:—
'He is, he can, that fewe lordes conne.'
And Pandarus, of that they wolde afferme,
He not for-gat hir preysing to conferme.

228. Herde al this thing Criseyde wel y-nough,
And every word gan for to notifye;
For which with sobre chere hir herte lough;
For who is that ne wolde hir glorifye,
To mowens wich a knight don live or dye?
But al passe I, lest ye to longe dwelle;
For for o fyn is al that ever I telle.

229. The tyme com, fro diner for to ryse,
And, as hem oughte, arisen every-choon,
And gonne a while of this and that devyse.
But Pandarus brak al this speche anoon,
And seyde to Deiphebus, 'wole ye goon,
If yourë wille be, as I yow preyde,
To speke here of the nedes of Criseyde?'

230. Eleyne, which that by the hond hir held,
Took first the tale, and seyde, 'go we blyve;'
And goodly on Criseyde she biheld,
And seyde, 'Ioves lat him never thryve,
That dooth yow harm, and bringe him sone of lyve
And yeve me sorwe, but he shal it rewe,
If that I may, and alle folk be trewe.'

231. 'Tel thou thy neces cas,' quod Deiphebus
To Pandarus, 'for thou canst best it telle.'—
'My lordes and my ladyes, it stant thus;
What sholde I lenger,' quod he, 'do yow dwelle?'
He rong hem out a proces lyk a belle,
Up-on hir fo, that highte Poliphete,
So hëynous, that men mighte on it spete.

232. Answerde of this ech worse of hem than other,

And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien,
'An-honged be swich oon, were he my brother';
And so he shal, for it ne may not varien.'
What sholde I lenger in this tale tarien?
Pleynly, alle at ones, they hir highten,
To been hir helpe in al that ever they mighten.

233. Spak than Eleyne, and seyde, 'Pandarus,
Woot ought my lord, my brother, this matere,
I mene, Ector? or woot it Troilus?'
He seyde, 'ye, but wole ye now me here?
Me thinketh this, sith Troilus is here,
It were good, if that ye wolde assente,
She tolde hir-self him al this, er she wente.

234. For he wole have the more hir grief at herte,
By cause, lo, that she a lady is;
And, by your leve, I wol but right in sterte,
And do yow wite, and that anoon, y-wis,
If that he slepe, or wole ought here of this.'
And in he lepte, and seyde him in his ere,
'God have thy soule, y-brought have I thy bere!'

235. To smylen of this gan tho Troilus,
And Pandarus, with-oute rekeninge,
Out wente anoon to Eleyne and Deiphebus,
And seyde hem, 'so there be no taryinge,
Ne more pres, he wol wel that ye bringe
Crisëyda, my lady, that is here;
And as he may enduren, he wole here.

236. But wel ye woot, the chaumbre is but lyte,
And fewe folk may lightly make it warm;
Now loketh ye, (for I wol have no wyte,
To bringe in prees that mighte doon him harm
Or him disesen, for my bettre arm,)
Wher it be bet she byde til eft-sones;
Now loketh ye, that knowen what to doon is.

237. I sey for me, best is, as I can knowe,
That no wight in ne wente but ye tweye,
But it were I, for I can, in a throwe,
Reherce hir cas, unlyk that she can seye;
And after this, she may him ones preye
To ben good lord, in short, and take hir leve;
This may not muchel of his ese him reve.

238. And eek, for she is straunge, he wol forbere
His ese, which that him thar nought for yow;
Eek other thing, toucheth not to here,
He wol me telle, I woot it wel right now,
That secret is, and for the tounes prow.'
And they, that no-thing knewe of this entente,
With-oute more, to Troilus in they wente.

239. Eleyne in al hir goodly softe wyse,
Gan him saluwe, and womanly to pleye,
And seyde, 'ywis, ye moste alweyes aryse!
Now fayre brother, beth al hool, I preye!'

And gan hir arm right over his sholder leye,
And him with al hir wit to recomforte;
As she best coude, she gan him to disporte.

240. So after this quod she, 'we yow biseke,
My dere brother, Deiphebus, and I,
For love of god, and so doth Pandare eke,
To been good lord and freend, right hertely,
Un-to Criseyde, which that certeinly
Receyveth wrong, as woot wel here Pandare,
That can hir cas wel bet than I declare.'

241. This Pandarus gan newe his tunge affyle,
And al hir cas reherce, and that anoon;
Whan it was seyd, sone after, in a whyle,
Quod Troilus, 'as sone as I may goon,
I wol right fayn with al my might ben oon,
Have god my trouthe, hir cause to sustene.'
'Good thrift have ye,' quod Eleyne the quene.

242. Quod Pandarus, 'and it your wille be,
That she may take hir leve, er that she go?'
'Or elles god for-bede,' tho quod he,
'If that she vouche sauf for to do so.'
And with that word quod Troilus, 'ye two,
Deiphebus, and my suster leef and dere,
To yow have I to speke of o matere,

243. To been avysed by your reed the bettre';—

And fond, as hap was, at his beddes heed,
The copie of a tretis and a lettre,
That Ector hadde him sent to axen reed,
If swich a man was worthy to ben deed,
Woot I nought who; but in a grisly wyse
He preyede hem anoon on it avyse.

244. Deiphebus gan this lettre to unfolde
In ernest greet; so dide Eleyne the quene;
And rominge outward, fast it gan biholde,
Downward a steyre, in-to an herber grene.
This ilke thing they redden hem bi-twene;
And largely, the mountaunce of an houre,
They gonne on it to reden and to poure.

245. Now lat hem rede, and turne we anoon
To Pandarus, that gan ful faste prye
That al was wel, and out he gan to goon
In-to the grete chambre, and that in hye,
And seyde, 'god save al this compayne!
Com, nece myn; my lady quene Eleyne
Abydeth yow, and eek my lordes tweyne.

246. Rys, take with yow your nece Antigone,
Or whom yow list, or no fors, hardily;
The lasse prees, the bet; com forth with me,
And loke that ye thonke humblely
Hem alle three, and, whan ye may goodly
Your tyme y-see, taketh of hem your leve,

Lest we to longe his restes him bireve.'

247. Al innocent of Pandarus entente,
Quod tho Criseyde, 'go we, uncle dere';
And arm in arm inward with him she wente,
Avysed wel hir wordes and hir chere;
And Pandarus, in ernestful manere,
Seyde, 'alle folk, for goddes love, I preye,
Stinteth right here, and softely yow pleye.

248. Aviseth yow what folk ben here with-inne,
And in what plyt oon is, god him amende!
And inward thus ful softely biginne;
Nece, I coniure and heighly yow defende,
On his half, which that sowle us alle sende,
And in the vertue of corounes tweyne,
Slee nought this man, that hath for yow this peyne!

249. Fy on the devel! thenk which oon he is,
And in what plyt he lyth; com of anoon;
Thenk al swich taried tyd, but lost it nis!
That wol ye bothe seyn, whan ye ben oon.
Secoundelich, ther yet devyneth noon
Up-on yow two; com of now, if ye conne;
Whyl folk is blent, lo, al the tyme is wonne!

250. In titering, and pursuite, and delayes,
The folk devyne at wagginge of a stree;
And though ye wolde han after merye dayes,
Than dar ye nought, and why? for she, and she
Spak swich a word; thus loked he, and he;
Lest tyme I loste, I dar not with yow dele;
Com of therfore, and bringeth him to hele.'

251. But now to yow, ye lovers that ben here,
Was Troilus nought in a cankedort,
That lay, and mighte whispringe of hem here,
And thoughte, 'O lord, right now renneth my sort
Fully to dye, or han anoon comfort';
And was the firste tyme he shulde hir preye
Of love; O mighty god, what shal he seye?

Explicit Secundus Liber.

BOOK III.

INCIPIT PROHEMIUM TERCII LIBRI.

1. O BLISFUL light, of whiche the bemes clere
Adorneth al the thridde hevene faire!
O sonnes leef, O Ioves doughter dere,
Plesaunce of love, O goodly debonaire
In gentil hertes ay redy to repaire!
O verray cause of hele and of gladnesse,
Y-heried be thy might and thy goodnesse!

2. In hevene and helle, in erthe and salte see
Is felt thy might, if that I wel descerne;
As man, brid, best, fish, herbe and grene tree
Thee fele in tymes with vapour eterne.

God loveth, and to love wol nought werne;
And in this world no lyves creature,
With-outen love, is worth, or may endure.

3. Ye lovers first to thilke effectes glade,
Thorugh which that thinges liven wel and be,
Comeveden, and amorous him made
On mortal thing, and as yow list, ay ye
Yeve him in love ese or adversitee;
And in a thousand formes doun him sente
For love in erthe, and whom yow list, he hente.

4. Ye flemen Mars apeysen of his ire,
And, as yow list, ye maken hertes lighte;
Algates, hem that ye wol sette a-fyre,
They sonken in desyr of your delyte;
Ye do hem corteys be, fresshe and wyse,
And quyke or lowe, after a night entende;
The loves that he hath, your might him sendeth.

5. Ye holden regne and hous in unitee;
Ye wommen save of freedom and franchise;
Ye knowe al thilke covered qualitee
Of thinges which that folk on wonderen so,
Whan they can not construe how it may be,
Why she loveth him, or why he loveth here:
As why this fish, and nought that, comth to were.

6. Ye folk a lawe han set in universe,
And this knowe I by hem that conne hit,
That noon request nought with you hath the herse:
Nere, axe Alceste, for hir worthynesse,
At reverence of hem that wenten hire,
Whos clerk I am, so techeth me devyse
Som love of that is felt in thy servyse.

7. Ye in my naked herte sentement
Inhelde, and do me shewe of thy swetnesse, —
Caliope, thy vois be now present,
For now is nede; sestow not my destresse,
How I mot telle anon-right the gladnesse
Of Troilus, to Venus heryinge?
To which gladnes, who nede hath, god him bringe!

Explicit prohemium Tercii Libri.

INCIPIT LIBER TERCIUS.

8. Lay al this mene whyle Troilus,
Recordinge his lessoun in this manere,
'Ma fey!' thought he, 'thus wole I seye and thus;
Thus wole I pleyne un-to my lady dere;
That word is good, and this shal be my chere;
This art I nat forgeten in no wyse.'
God leve him werken as he gan devyse.

9. And lord, so that his herte gan to quappe,
Heringe hir come, and shorte for to rise!
And Pandarus, that ladde hir by the lappe,
Com nere, and gan in at the curtin prye,
And seyde, 'god doboote on alle sykes!
See, who is here yow comen to visyte;
Lo, here is she that is your deeth to wyte.'

10. Therwith it wexed as he wepte amor;
'A ha,' quod Troilus so rewfully,
'Whan me is wo, O mighty god, how wot'
Who is al there? I see nought trewely.'

'Sire,' quod Criseyde, 'it is Pandare and I.'
'Ye, swete herte? allas, I may nought ryse
To knele, and do yow honour in som wyse.'

11. And dressede him upward, and she right tho
Gan bothe here hondes softe upon him leye,
'O, for the love of god, do ye not so
To me,' quod she, 'ey! what is this to seye?
Sire, come am I to yow for causes tweye;
First, yow to thonke, and of your lordshipe eke
Continuance I wolde yow biseke.'

12. This Troilus, that herde his lady preye
Of lordship him, wex neither quik ne deed,
Ne mighte a word for shame to it seye,
Al-though men sholde smyten of his heed.
But lord, so he wex sodeinliche reed,
And sire, his lesson, that he wende conne,
To preyen hir, is thurgh his wit y-ronne.

13. Cryseyde al this aspyede wel y-nough,
For she was wys, and lovede him never-the-lasse,
Al nere he malapert, or made it tough,
Or was to bold, to singe a fool a masse.
But whan his shame gan somwhat to passe,
His resons, as I may my rymes holde,
I yow wol telle, as techen bokes olde.

14. In chaunged vois, right for his verrey drede,
Which vois eek quook, and ther-to his manere
Goodly abayst, and now his hewes rede,
Now pale, un-to Criseyde, his lady dere,
With look doun cast and humble yolden chere,
Lo, the alderfirste word that him asterte
Was, twyes, 'mercy, mercy, swete herte!'

15. And stinte a whyl, and whan he mighte out-bringe,
The nexte word was, 'god wot, for I have,
As feythfully as I have had konninge,
Ben youres, also god my sowle save;
And shal, til that I, woful wight, be grave.
And though I dar ne can un-to yow pleyne,
Y-wis, I suffre nought the lasse peyne.

16. Thus muche as now, O wommanliche wyf,
I may out-bringe, and if this yow displese,
That shal I wreke upon myn owne lyf
Right sone, I trowe, and doon your herte an ese,
If with my deeth your herte I may apese.
But sin that ye han herd me somwhat seye,
Now recche I never how sone that I deye.'

17. Ther-with his manly sorwe to biholde,
It mighte han maad an herte of stoon to rewe;
And Pandare weep as he to watre wolde,
And poked ever his nece newe and newe,
And seyde, 'wo bigon ben hertes trewe!

For love of god make of this thing an ende,
Or slee us bothe at ones, er that ye wende.'

18. 'I? what?' quod she, 'by god and by my trouthe,
I noot nought what ye wilne that I seye.'
'I? what?' quod he, 'that ye han on him routhe,
For goddes love, and doth him nought to deye.'
'Now thanne thus,' quod she, 'I wolde him preye
To telle me the fyn of his entente;
Yet wiste I never wel what that he mente.'

19. 'What that I mene, O swete herte dere?'
Quod Troilus, 'O goodly fresshe free!
That, with the stremes of your eyen clere,
Ye wolde som-tyme freendly on me see,
And thanne agreën that I may ben he,
With-oute braunche of vyce in any wyse,
In trouthe alwey to doon yow my servyse

20. As to my lady right and chief resort,
With al my wit and al my diligence,
And I to han, right as yow list, comfort,
Under your yerde, egal to myn offence,
As deeth, if that I breke your defence;
And that ye deigne me so muche honoure,
Me to comaunden ought in any houre.

21. And I to ben your verray humble trewe,
Secret, and in my paynes pacient,
And ever-mo desire freshly newe,
To serven, and been y-lyke ay diligent,
And, with good herte, al holly your talent
Receyven wel, how sore that me smerte,
Lo, this mene I, myn owne swete herte.'

22. Quod Pandarus, 'lo, here an hard request,
And resonable, a lady for to werne!
Now, nece myn, by natal Ioves fest,
Were I a god, ye sholde sterve as yerne;
That heren wel, this man wol nothing yerne
But your honour, and seen him almost sterve,
And been so looth to suffren him yow serve.'

23. With that she gan hir eyen on him caste
Ful esily, and ful debonairly,
Avysing hir, and hyed not to faste
With never a word, but seyde him softely,
'Myn honour sauf, I wol wel trewely,
And in swich forme as he can now devyse,
Receyven him fully to my servyse,

24. Biseching him, for goddes love, that he
Wolde, in honour of trouthe and gentilesse,
As I wel mene, eek mene wel to me,
And myn honour, with wit and besinesse,
Ay kepe; and if I may don him gladnesse,
From hennes-forth, y-wis, I nil not feyne:
Now beeth al hool, no lenger ye ne pleyne.

25. But nathelees, this warne I yow.' quod she,

'A kinges sone al-though ye be, y-wis,
Ye shul na-more have soverainetee
Of me in love, than right in that cas is;
Ne I nil forbere, if that ye doon a-mis,
To wrathen yow; and whyl that ye me serve,
Cherycen yow right after ye deserve.

26. And shortly, derë herte and al my knight,
Beth glad, and draweth yow to lustinesse,
And I shal trewely, with al my might,
Your bittre tornen al in-to swetnesse;
If I be she that may yow do gladnesse,
For every wo ye shal recovere a blisse';
And him in armes took, and gan him kisse.

27. Fil Pandarus on knees, and up his yën
To hevene threw, and held his hondes hye,
'Immortal god!' quod he, 'that mayst nought dyen,
Cupide I mene, of this mayst glorifye;
And Venus, thou mayst make melodye;
With-outen hond, me semeth that in towne,
For this merveyle, I here ech belle sowne.

28. But ho! no more as now of this matere,
For-why this folk wol comen up anoon,
That han the lettre red; lo, I hem here.
But I coniure thee, Criseyde, and oon,
And two, thou Troilus, whan thow mayst goon,
That at myn hous ye been at my warninge,
For I ful wel shal shape your cominge;

29. And eseth ther your hertes right y-nough;
And lat see which of yow shal bere the belle
To speke of love a-right!' ther-with he lough,
'For ther have ye a layser for to telle.'
Quod Troilus, 'how longe shal I dwelle
Er this be doon?' Quod he, 'whan thou mayst ryse,
This thing shal be right as I yow devyse.'

30. With that Eleyne and also Deiphebus
Tho comen upward, right at the steyres ende;
And lord, so than gan grone Troilus,
His brother and his suster for to blende.
Quod Pandarus, 'it tyme is that we wende;
Tak, nece myn, your leve at alle three,
And lat hem speke, and cometh forth with me.'

31. She took hir leve at hem ful thriftily,
As she wel coude, and they hir reverence
Un-to the fulle diden hardely,
And spoken wonder wel, in hir absence,
Of hir, in preysing of hir excellence,
Hir governaunce, hir wit; and hir manere
Commendeden, it Ioye was to here.

32. Now lat hir wende un-to hir owne place,
And torne we to Troilus a-yein,
That gan ful lightly of the lettre passe,
That Deiphebus hadde in the gardin seyn.
And of Eleyne and him he wolde fayn

Delivered been, and seyde, that him leste
To slepe, and after tales have reste.

33. Eleyne him kiste, and took hir leve blyve,
Deiphebus eek, and hoom wente every wight;
And Pandarus as faste as he may dryve,
To Troilus tho com, as lyne right;
And on a paillet, al that glade night,
By Troilus he lay, with mery chere,
To tale; and wel was hem they were y-fere.

34. Whan every wight was voided but they two,
And alle the dores were faste y-shette,
To telle in short, with-oute wordes mo,
This Pandarus, with-outen any lette,
Up roos, and on his beddes syde him sette,
And gan to speken in a sobre wyse
To Troilus, as I shal yow devyse.

35. 'Myn alderlevest lord, and brother dere,
God woot, and thou, that it sat me so sore,
When I thee saw so languisshing to-yere,
For love, of which thy wo wex alwey more;
That I, with al my might and al my lore,
Have ever sithen doon my bisinesse
To bringe thee to Ioye out of distresse;

36. And have it brought to swich plyt as thou wost,
So that, thorugh me, thow stondest now in weye
To fare wel, I seye it for no bost,
And wostow why? for shame it is to seye,
For thee have I bigonne a gamen pleye
Which that I never doon shal eft for other,
Al-though he were a thousand fold my brother.

37. That is to seye, for thee am I bicomen,
Bitwixen game and ernest, swich a mene
As maken wommen un-to men to comen;
Al sey I nought, thou wost wel what I mene.
For thee have I my nece, of vyces clene,
So fully maad thy gentilesse triste,
That al shal been right as thy-selve liste.

38. But god, that al wot, take I to witnesse,
That never I this for coveityse wroughte,
But only for to abregge that distresse,
For which wel nygh thou deydest, as me thoughte.
But gode brother, do now as thee oughte,
For goddes love, and keep hir out of blame,
Sin thou art wys, and save alwey hir name.

39. For wel thou wost, the name as yet of here
Among the peple, as who seyth, halwed is;
For that man is unbore, I dar wel swere,
That ever wiste that she dide amis.
But wo is me, that I, that cause al this,
May thenken that she is my nece dere,
And I hir eem, and traytor eek y-fere!

40. And were it wist that I, through myn engyn,
Hadde in my nece y-put this fantasye,

To do thy lust, and hoolly to be thyn,
Why, al the world up-on it wolde crye,
And seye, that I the worste trecherye
Dide in this cas, that ever was bigonne,
And she for-lost, and thou right nought y-wonne.

41. Wher-fore, er I wol ferther goon a pas,
Yet eft I thee biseche and fully seye,
That privetee go with us in this cas,
That is to seye, that thou us never wreye;
And be nought wrooth, though I thee ofte preye
To holden secree swich an heigh matere;
For skilful is, thow wost wel, my preyere.

42. And thenk what wo ther hath bitid er this,
For makinge of avauntes, as men rede;
And what mischaunce in this world yet ther is,
Fro day to day, right for that wikked dede;
For which these wyse clerkes that ben dede
Han ever yet proverbed to us yonge,
That "firste vertu is to kepe tonge."

43. And, nere it that I wilne as now tabregge
Diffusioun of speche, I coude almost
A thousand olde stories thee alegge
Of wommen lost, thorugh fals and foles bost;
Proverbes canst thy-self y-nowe, and wost,
Ayeins that vyce, for to been a labbe,
Al seyde men sooth as often as they gabbe.

44. O tonge, allas! so often here-biforn
Hastow made many a lady bright of hewe
Seyd, "welawey! the day that I was born!"
And many a maydes sorwes for to newe;
And, for the more part, al is untrewe
That men of yelpe, and it were brought to preve;
Of kinde non avauntour is to leve.

45. Avauntour and a lyere, al is on;
As thus: I pose, a womman graunte me
Hir love, and seyth that other wol she non,
And I am sworn to holden it secree,
And after I go telle it two or three;
Y-wis, I am avauntour at the leste,
And lyere, for I breke my biheste.

46. Now loke thanne, if they be nought to blame,
Swich maner folk; what shal I clepe hem, what,
That hem avaunte of wommen, and by name,
That never yet bihighte hem this ne that,
Ne knewe hem more than myn olde hat?
No wonder is, so god me sende hele,
Though wommen drede with us men to dele.

47. I sey not this for no mistrust of yow,
Ne for no wys man, but for foles nyce,
And for the harm that in the world is now,
As wel for foly ofte as for malyce;
For wel wot I, in wyse folk, that vyce
No womman drat, if she be wel avysed;
For wyse ben by foles harm chastysed.

48. But now to purpos; leve brother dere,
Have al this thing that I have seyd in minde,

And keep thee clos, and be now of good chere,
For at thy day thou shalt me trewe finde.
I shal thy proces sette in swich a kinde,
And god to-forn, that it shall thee suffyse,
For it shal been right as thou wolt devyse.

49. For wel I woot, thou menest wel, parde;
Therfore I dar this fully undertake.
Thou wost eek what thy lady graunted thee,
And day is set, the chartres up to make.
Have now good night, I may no lenger wake;
And bid for me, sin thou art now in blisse,
That god me sende deeth or sone lisse.'

50. Who mighte telle half the Ioye or feste
Which that the sowle of Troilus tho felte,
Heringe theffect of Pandarus biheste?
His olde wo, that made his herte swelte,
Gan tho for Ioye wasten and tomelte,
And al the richesse of his sykes sore
At ones fledde, he felte of hem no more.

51. But right so as these holtes and these hayes,
That han in winter dede been and dreye,
Revesten hem in grene, whan that May is,
Whan every lusty lyketh best to pleye:
Right in that selve wyse, sooth to seye,
Wex sodeynliche his herte ful of Ioye,
That gladder was ther never man in Troye.

52. And gan his look on Pandarus up caste
Ful sobrely, and frendly for to see,
And seyde, 'freend, in Aprille the laste,
As wel thou wost, if it remembre thee,
How neigh the deeth for wo thou founde me;
And how thou didest al thy bisinesse
To knowe of me the cause of my distresse.

53. Thou wost how longe I it for-bar to seye
To thee, that art the man that I best triste;
And peril was it noon to thee biwreye,
That wiste I wel; but tel me, if thee liste,
Sith I so looth was that thy-self it wiste,
How dorste I mo tellen of this matere,
That quake now, and no wight may us here?

54. But natheles, by that god I thee swere,
That, as him list, may al this world governe,
And, if I lye, Achilles with his spere
Myn herte cleve, al were my lyf eterne,
As I am mortal, if I late or yerne
Wolde it biwreye, or dorste, or sholde conne,
For al the good that god made under sonne;

55. That rather deye I wolde, and determyne,
As thinketh me, now stokked in presoun.
In wrecchednesse, in filthe, and in vermyne,
Caytif to cruel king Agamenoun;
And this, in alle the temples of this toun,
Upon the goddes alle, I wol thee swere.

To-morwe day, if that thee lyketh here.

56. And that thou hast so muche y-doon for me,
That I ne may it never-more deserve,
This knowe I wel, al mighte I now for thee
A thousand tymes on a morwen sterve,
I can no more, but that I wol thee serve
Right as thy sclave, whider-so thou wende,
For ever-more, un-to my lyves ende!

57. But here, with al myn herte, I thee biseche,
That never in me thou deme swich folye
As I shal seyn; me thoughte, by thy speche,
That this, which thou me dost for companye,
I sholde wene it were a bauderye;
I am nought wood, al-if I lewed be;
It is nought so, that woot I wel, pardee.

58. But he that goth, for gold or for richesse,
On swich message, calle him what thee list;
And this that thou dost, calle it gentilesse,
Compassioun, and felawship, and trist;
Departe it so, for wyde-where is wist
How that there is dyversitee requered
Bitwixen thingus lyke, as I have lered.

59. And, that thou knowe I thenke nought ne wene
That this servyse a shame be or lape,
I have my faire suster Polixene,
Cassandre, Eleyne, or any of the frape;
Be she never so faire or wel y-shape,
Tel me, which thou wilt of everichone,
To han for thyn, and lat me thanne allone.

60. But sin that thou hast don me this servyse,
My lyf to save, and for noon hope of mede,
So, for the love of god, this grete empryse
Parforme it out; for now is moste nede.
For high and low, with-outen any drede,
I wol alwey thyne hestes alle kepe;
Have now good night, and lat us bothe slepe.'

61. Thus held him ech with other wel apayed,
That al the world ne mighte it bet amende;
And, on the morwe, whan they were arayed,
Ech to his owene nedes gan entende.
But Troilus, though as the fyr he brende
For sharp desyr of hope and of plesaunce,
He not for-gat his gode governaunce.

62. But in him-self with manhod gan restreyne
Ech rakel dede and ech unbrydled chere,
That alle tho that liven, sooth to seyne,
Ne sholde han wist, by word or by manere,
What that he mente, as touching this matere.
From every wight as fer as is the cloude
He was, so wel dissimulen he coude.

63. And al the whyl which that I yow devyse,
This was his lyf; with al his fulle might,
By day he was in Martes high servyse,

This is to seyn, in armes as a knight;
And for the more part, the longe night
He lay, and thoughte how that he mighte serve
His lady best, hir thank for to deserve.

64. Nil I nought swerë, al-though he lay softe,
That in his thought he nas sumwhat disesed,
Ne that he tornede on his pilwes ofte,
And wolde of that him missed han ben sesed;
But in swich cas man is nought alwey plesed,
For ought I wot, no more than was he;
That can I deme of possibilitee.

65. But certeyn is, to purpos for to go,
That in this whyle, as writen is in geste,
He say his lady som-tyme; and also
She with him spak, whan that she dorste or leste,
And by hir bothe avys, as was the beste,
Apoynteden ful warly in this nede,
So as they dorste, how they wolde procede.

66. But it was spoken in so short a wyse,
In swich awayt alwey, and in swich fere,
Lest any wyght divynen or devyse
Wolde of hem two, or to it leye an ere,
That al this world so leef to hem ne were
As that Cupido wolde hem grace sende
To maken of hir speche aright an ende.

67. But thilke litel that they speke or wroughte,
His wyse goost took ay of al swich hede,
It semed hir, he wiste what she thoughte
With-outen word, so that it was no nede
To bidde him ought to done, or ought for-bede;
For which she thoughte that love, al come it late,
Of alle Ioye hadde opned hir the yate.

68. And shortly of this proces for to pace,
So wel his werk and wordes he bisette,
That he so ful stood in his lady grace,
That twenty thousand tymes, or she lette,
She thonked god she ever with him mette;
So coude he him governe in swich servyse,
That al the world ne mighte it bet devyse.

69. For-why she fond him so discreet in al,
So secret, and of swich obëisaunce,
That wel she felte he was to hir a wal
Of steel, and sheld from every displesaunce;
That, to ben in his gode governaunce,
So wys he was, she was no more afered,
I mene, as fer as oughte ben requered.

70. And Pandarus, to quike alwey the fyr,
Was ever y-lyke prest and diligent;
To ese his frend was set al his desyr.
He shof ay on, he to and fro was sent;
He lettres bar whan Troilus was absent.
That never man, as in his freendes nede,
Ne bar him bet than he, with-outen drede.

71. But now, paraunter, som man wayten wolde
That every worde, or sonde, or look, or chere
Of Troilus that I rehersen sholde,
In al this whyle, un-to his lady dere;
I trowe it were a long thing for to here;
Or of what wight that stant in swich disioynte,
His wordes alle, or every look, to poynte.

72. For sothe, I have not herd it doon er this,
In storye noon, ne no man here, I wene;
And though I wolde I coude not, y-wis;
For ther was som epistel hem bitwene.
That wolde, as seyth myn auctor, wel contene
Neigh half this book, of which him list not wryte;
How sholde I thanne a lyne of it endyte?

73. But to the grete effect: than sey I thus,
That stonding in concord and in quiete
Thise ilke two, Criseyde and Troilus,
As I have told, and in this tyme swete;
Save only often mighte they not mete,
Ne layser have hir speches to fulfelle,
That it befel right as I shal yow telle,

74. That Pandarus, that ever dide his might
Right for the fyn that I shal speke of here,
As for to bringe to his hous som night
His faire nece, and Troilus y-fere,
Wher-as at leyser al this heigh matere,
Touching hir love, were at the fulle up-bounde,
Hadde out of doute a tyme to it founde.

75. For he with greet deliberacioun
Hadde every thing that her-to mighte avayle
Forn-cast, and put in execucioun,
And neither laft for cost ne for travayle;
Come if hem lest, hem sholde nothing fayle;
And for to been in ought espyed there,
That, wiste he wel, an inpossible were.

76. Dredelees, it cleer was in the wind
Of every pye and every lette-game;
Now al is wel, for al the world is blind
In this matere, bothe fremed and tame.
This timber is al redy up to frame;
Us lakketh nought but that we witen wolde
A certein houre, in whiche she comen sholde.

77. And Troilus, that al this purveyaunce
Knew at the fulle, and waytede on it ay,
Hadde here-up-on eek mad gret ordenaunce,
And founde his cause, and ther-to his aray,
If that he were missed, night or day,
Ther-whyle he was aboute this servyse,
That he was goon to doon his sacrifyse,

78. And moste at swich a temple alone wake,
Answered of Appollo for to be;
And first, to seen the holy laurer quake,
Er that Apollo spak out of the tree,

To telle him next whan Grekes sholden flee,
And forthy lette him no man, god forbede,
But preye Apollo helpen in this nede.

79. Now is ther litel more for to done,
But Pandare up, and shortly for to seyne,
Right sone upon the chaunging of the mone,
Whan lightles is the world a night or tweyne,
And that the welken shoop him for to reyne,
He streight a-morwe un-to his nece wente;
Ye han wel herd the fyn of his entente.

80. Whan he was come, he gan anoon to pleye
As he was wont, and of him-self to Iape;
And fynally, he swor and gan hir seye,
By this and that, she sholde him not escape,
Ne lenger doon him after hir to gape;
But certeynly she moste, by hir leve,
Come soupen in his hous with him at eve.

81. At whiche she lough, and gan hir faste excuse,
And seyde, 'it rayneth; lo, how sholde I goon?'
'Lat be,' quod he, 'ne stond not thus to muse;
This moot be doon, ye shal be ther anoon.'
So at the laste her-of they felle at oon,
Or elles, softe he swor hir in hir ere,
He nolde never come ther she were.

82. Sone after this, to him she gan to rowne,
And asked him if Troilus were there?
He swor hir, 'nay, for he was out of towne,'
And seyde, 'nece, I pose that he were,
Yow thurfte never have the more fere.
For rather then men mighte him ther aspye,
Me were lever a thousand-fold to dye.'

83. Nought list myn auctor fully to declare
What that she thoughte whan he seyde so,
That Troilus was out of town y-fare,
As if he seyde ther-of sooth or no;
But that, with-oute awayt, with him to go,
She graunted him, sith he hir that bisoughte,
And, as his nece, obeyed as hir oughte.

84. But nathelees, yet gan she him biseche,
Al-though with him to goon it was no fere,
For to be war of goosish peples speche,
That dremen thinges whiche that never were,
And wel avyse him whom he broughte there;
And seyde him, 'eem, sin I mot on yow triste,
Loke al be wel, and do now as yow liste.'

85. He swor hir, 'yis, by stokkes and by stones,
And by the goddes that in hevene dwelle,
Or elles were him lever, soule and bones,
With Pluto king as depe been in helle
As Tantalus!' What sholde I more telle?
Whan al was wel, he roos and took his leve,
And she to souper com, whan it was eve,

86. With a certayn of hir owene men,
And with hir faire nece Antigone,
And othere of hir wommen nyne or ten;
But who was glad now, who, as trowe ye,
But Troilus, that stood and mighte it see
Thurgh-out a litel windowe in a stewe,
Ther he bishet, sin midnight, was in mewe,

87. Unwist of every wight but of Pandare?
But to the poynt; now whan she was y-come
With alle Ioye, and alle frendes fare,
Hir eem anoon in armes hath hir nome,
And after to the souper, alle and some,
Whan tyme was, ful softe they hem sette;
God wot, ther was no deyntee for to fette.

88. And after souper gonnen they to ryse,
At ese wel, with hertes fresshe and glade,
And wel was him that coude best devyse
To lyken hir, or that hir laughen made.
He song; she pleyde; he tolde tale of Wade.
But at the laste, as every thing hath ende,
She took hir leve, and nedes wolde wende.

89. But O, Fortune, executrice of wierdes,
O influences of thise hevenes hye!
Soth is, that, under god, ye ben our hierdes,
Though to us bestes been the causes wrye.
This mene I now, for she gan hoomward hye,
But execut was al bisyde hir leve,
At the goddes wil; for which she moste bleve.

90. The bente mone with hir hornes pale,
Saturne, and Iove, in Cancro ioyned were,
That swich a rayn from hevene gan avale,
That every maner womman that was there
Hadde of that smoky reyn a verray fere;
At which Pandare tho lough, and seyde thenne,
'Now were it tyme a lady to go henne!

91. But goode nece, if I mighte ever plese
Yow any-thing, than prey I yow,' quod he,
'To doon myn herte as now so greet an ese
As for to dwelle here al this night with me,
For-why this is your owene hous, pardee.
For, by my trouthe, I sey it nought a-game,
To wende as now, it were to me a shame.'

92. Criseyde, whiche that coude as muche good
As half a world, tok hede of his preyere;
And sin it ron, and al was on a flood,
She thoughte, as good chep may I dwellen here,
And graunte it gladly with a freendes chere,
And have a thank, as grucche and thanne abyde;
For hoom to go on it may nought wel bityde.

93. 'I wol,' quod she, 'myn uncle leef and dere,
Sin that yow list, it skile is to be so;
I am right glad with yow to dwellen here;

I seyde but a-game, I wolde go.'
'Y-wis, graunt mercy, nece!' quod he tho;
'Were it a game or no, soth for to telle,
Now am I glad, sin that yow list to dwelle.'

94. Thus al is wel; but tho bigan aright
The newe Ioye, and al the fest agayn;
But Pandarus, if goodly hadde he might,
He wolde han hyed hir to bedde fayn,
And seye, 'lord, this is an huge rayn!
This were a weder for to slepen inne;
And that I rede us sone to biginne.

95. And nece, woot ye wher I wol yow leye,
For that we shul not liggen fer asonder,
And for ye neither shullen, dar I seye,
Hern noise of reynes nor of thonder?
By god, right in my lyte closet yonder.
And I wol in that outer hous allone
Be wardeyn of your wommen everichone

96. And in this middel chaumbre that ye see
Shul youre wommen slepen wel and softe;
And ther I seyde shal your-selve be;
And if ye liggen wel to-night, com ofte,
And careth not what weder is on-lofte.
The wyn anon, and whan so that yow leste,
So go we slepe, I trowe it be the beste.'

97. Ther nis no more, but here-after sone,
The voydè dronke, and travers drawe anon,
Gan every wight, that hadde nought to done
More in that place, out of the chaumber gon.
And ever-mo so sternelich it ron,
And blew ther-with so wonderliche loude,
That wel neigh no man heren other coude.

98. Tho Pandarus, hir eem, right as him oughte,
With women swiche as were hir most aboute,
Ful glad un-to hir beddes syde hir broughte,
And toke his leve, and gan ful lowe loute,
And seyde, 'here at this closet-dore with-oute,
Right over-thwart, your wommen liggen alle,
That, whom yow liste of hem, ye may here calle.'

99. So whan that she was in the closet leyd,
And alle hir wommen forth by ordenaunce
A-bedde weren, ther as I have seyd,
There was no more to skippen nor to traunce,
But boden go to bedde, with mis-chaunce,
If any wight was steringe any-where,
And late hem slepe that a-bedde were.

100. But Pandarus, that wel coude eche a del
The olde daunce, and every poynt ther-inne,
Whan that he sey that alle thing was wel,
He thoughte he wolde up-on his werk biginne,
And gan the stewe-dore al softe un-pinne,
And stille as stoon, with-outen lenger lette,
By Troilus a-doun right he him sette.

101. And, shortly to the poynt right for to gon,
Of al this werk he tolde him word and ende,
And seyde, 'make thee redy right anon,
For thou shalt in-to hevene blisse wende.'
'Now blisful Venus, thou me grace sende,'
Quod Troilus, 'for never yet no nede
Hadde I er now, ne halvendel the drede.'

102. Quod Pandarus, 'ne drede thee never a del,
For it shal been right as thou wilt desyre;
So thryve I, this night shal I make it wel,
Or casten al the gruwel in the fyre.'
'Yit blisful Venus, this night thou me enspyre,
Quod Troilus, 'as wis as I thee serve,
And ever bet and bet shal, til I sterve.

103. And if I hadde, O Venus ful of murthe,
Aspectes badde of Mars or of Saturne,
Or thou combust or let were in my birthe,
Thy fader prey al thilke harm disturne
Of grace, and that I glad ayein may turne,
For love of him thou lovedest in the shawe,
I mene Adoon, that with the boor was slawe.

104. O Iove eek, for the love of faire Europe,
The whiche in forme of bole away thou fette;
Now help, O Mars, thou with thy blody cope,
For love of Cipris, thou me nought ne lette;
O Phebus, thenk whan Dane hir-selven shette
Under the bark, and laurer wex for drede,
Yet for hir love, O help now at this nede!

105. Mercurie, for the love of Hiersè eke,
For which Pallas was with Aglauros wrooth,
Now help, and eek Diane, I thee biseke,
That this viage be not to thee looth.
O fatal sustren, which, er any clooth
Me shapen was, my destenè me sponne,
So helpeth to this werk that is bigonne!'

106. Quod Pandarus, 'thou wrecched mouses herte,
Art thou agast so that she wol thee byte?
Why, don this furred cloke up-on thy sherte,
And folowe me, for I wol han the wyte;
But byd, and lat me go bifore a lyte.'
And with that word he gan un-do a trappe,
And Troilus he broughte in by the lappe.

107. The sterne wind so loude gan to route
That no wight other noyse mighte here;
And they that layen at the dore with-oute,
Ful sykerly they slepten alle y-fere;
And Pandarus, with a ful sobre chere,
Goth to the dore anon with-outen lette,
Ther-as they laye, and softely it shette.

108. And as he com ayeinward prively,

His nece awook, and asked 'who goth there?'
'My dere nece,' quod he, 'it am I;
Ne wondreth not, ne have of it no fere;'
And ner he com, and seyde hir in hir ere,
'No word, for love of god I yow biseche;
Lat no wight ryse and heren of our speche.'

109. 'What! which wey be ye comen, *benedicite?*'
Quod she, 'and how thus unwist of hem alle?'
'Here at this secre trappe-dore,' quod he.
Quod tho Criseyde, 'lat me som wight calle.'
'Ey! god forbede that it sholde falle,'
Quod Pandarus, 'that ye swich foly wroughte!
They mighte deme thing they never er thoughte!

110. It is nought good a sleping hound to wake,
Ne yeve a wight a cause to devyne;
Your wommen slepen alle, I under-take,
So that, for hem, the hous men mighte myne;
And slepen wolen til the sonne shyne.
And whan my tale al brought is to an ende,
Unwist, right as I com, so wol I wende.

111. Now nece myn, ye shul wel understonde,'
Quod he, 'so as ye wommen demen alle,
That for to holde in love a man in honde,
And him hir "leef" and "dere herte" calle,
And maken him an howve above a calle,
I mene, as love an other in this whyle,
She doth hir-self a shame, and him a gyle.

112. Now wherby that I telle yow al this?
Ye woot your-self, as wel as any wight,
How that your love al fully graunted is
To Troilus, the worthieste knight,
Oon of this world, and ther-to trouthe plyght,
That, but it were on him along, ye nolde
Him never falsen, whyl ye liven sholde.

113. Now stant it thus, that sith I fro yow wente,
This Troilus, right platly for to seyn,
Is thurgh a goter, by a privè wente,
In-to my chaumbre come in al this reyn,
Unwist of every maner wight, certeyn,
Save of my-self, as wisly have I Ioye,
And by that feith I shal Pryam of Troye!

114. And he is come in swich peyne and distresse
That, but he be al fully wood by this,
He sodeynly mot falle in-to wodnesse,
But-if god helpe; and cause why this is,
He seyth him told is, of a freend of his,
How that ye sholde love oon that hatte Horaste,
For sorwe of which this night shalt been his laste.'

115. Criseyde, which that al this wonder herde,
Gan sodeynly aboute hir herte colde,

And with a syk she sorwfully answerde,
'Allas! I wende, who-so tales tolde,
My dere herte wolde me not holde
So lightly fals! allas! conceytes wronge,
What harm they doon, for now live I to longe!

116. Horaste! allas! and falsen Troilus?
I knowe him not, god helpe me so,' quod she;
'Allas! what wikked spirit tolde him thus?
Now certes, een, to-morwe, and I him see,
I shall ther-of as ful excusen me
As ever dide womman,' if him lyke;'
And with that word she gan ful sore syke.

117. 'O god!' quod she, 'so worldly selinesse,
Which clerkes callen fals felicitee,
Y-medled is with many a bitternesse!
Ful anguisshous than is, god woot,' quod she,
'Condicioun of veyn prosperitee;
For either Ioyes comen nought y-fere,
Or elles no wight hath hem alwey here.

118. O brotel wele of mannes Ioye unstable!
With what wight so thou be, or how thou pleye,
Either he woot that thou, Ioye, art muable,
Or woot it not, it moot ben oon of tweye;
Now if he woot it not, how may he seye
That he hath verray Ioye and selinesse,
That is of ignoraunce ay in derknesse?

119. Now if he woot that Ioye is transitorie,
As every Ioye of worldly thing mot flee,
Than every tyme he that hath in memorie,
The drede of lesing maketh him that he
May in no parfit selinesse be.
And if to lese his Ioye he set a myte,
Than semeth it that Ioye is worth ful lyte.

120. Wherfore I wol deffyne in this matere,
That trewely, for ought I can espye,
Ther is no verray wele in this world here.
But O, thou wikked serpent Ialousye,
Thou misbeleved and envious folye,
Why hastow Troilus me mad untriste,
That never yet agilte him, that I wiste?'

121. Quod Pandarus, 'thus fallen is this cas.'
'Why, uncle myn,' quod she, 'who tolde him this?
Why doth my dere herte thus, allas?'
'Ye woot, ye nece myn,' quod he, 'what is;
I hope al shal be wel that is amis.
For ye may quenche al this, if that yow leste,
And doth right so, for I holde it the beste.'

122. 'So shal I do to-morwe, y-wis,' quod she,
'And god to-forn, so that it shal suffyse.'
'To-morwe? allas, that were a fayr,' quod he,
'Nay, nay, it may not stonden in this wyse;
For, nece myn, thus wryten clerkes wyse,
That peril is with drecching in y-drawe;

Nay, swich abodes been nought worth an hawe.

123. Nece, al thing hath tyme, I dar avowe;
For whan a chaumber a-fyr is, or an halle,
Wel more nede is, it sodeynly rescowe
Than to dispute, and axe amonges alle
How is this candele in the straw y-falle?
A! *benedicite!* for al among that fare
The harm is doon, and fare-wel feldefare!

124. And, nece myn, ne take it not a-greef,
If that ye suffre him al night in this wo,
God help me so, ye hadde him never leef,
That dar I seyn, now there is but we two;
But wel I woot, that ye wol not do so;
Ye been to wys to do so gret folye,
To putte his lyf al night in Iupartye.'

125. 'Hadde I him never leef? By god, I wene
Ye hadde never thing so leef,' quod she.
'Now by my thrift,' quod he, 'that shal be sene;
For, sin ye make this ensample of me,
If I al night wolde him in sorwe see
For al the tresour in the toun of Troye,
I bidde god, I never mote have Ioye!

126. Now loke thanne, if ye, that been his love,
Shul putte al night his lyf in Iupartye
For thing of nought! Now, by that god above,
Nought only this delay comth of folye,
But of malyce, if that I shal nought lye.
What, platly, and ye suffre him in distresse,
Ye neither bountee doon ne gentilesse!'

127. Quod tho Criseyde, 'wole ye doon o thing,
And ye therwith shal stinte al his disese;
Have here, and bereth him this blewe ring,
For ther is no-thing mighte him bettre plese,
Save I my-self, ne more his herte apese;
And sey my dere herte, that his sorwe
Is causeles, that shal be seen tomorwe.'

128. 'A ring?' quod he, 'ye, hasel-wodes shaken!
Ye, nece myn, that ring moste han a stoon
That mighte dede men alyve maken;
And swich a ring, trowe I that ye have noon.
Discrecioun out of your heed is goon;
That fele I now,' quod he, 'and that is routhe;
O tyme y-lost, wel maystow cursen slouthe!

129. Wot ye not wel that noble and heigh corage
Ne sorweth not, ne stinteth eek for lyte?
But if a fool were in a Ialous rage,
I nolde setten at his sorwe a myte,
But feffe him with a fewe wordes whyte
Another day, whan that I mighte him finde:
But this thing stont al in another kinde.

130. This is so gentil and so tendre of herte,
That with his deeth he wol his sorwes wreke;
For trusteth wel, how sore that him smerte,
He wol to yow no Ialouse wordes speke.
And for-thy, nece, er that his herte breke,
So spek your-self to him of this matere;
For with o word ye may his herte stere.

131. Now have I told what peril he is inne,
And his coming unwist is to every wight;
Ne, pardee, harm may ther be noon ne sinne;
I wol my-self be with yow al this night.
Ye knowe eek how it is your owne knight,
And that, by right, ye moste upon him triste,
And I al prest to fecche him whan yow liste.'

132. This accident so pitous was to here,
And eek so lyk a sooth, at pryme face,
And Troilus hir knight to hir so dere,
His privè coming, and the siker place,
That, though that she dide him as thanne a grace,
Considered alle thinges as they stode,
No wonder is, sin she dide al for gode.

133. Cryseyde answerde, 'as wisly god at reste
My sowle bringe, as me is for him wo!
And eem, y-wis, fayn wolde I doon the beste,
If that I hadde grace to do so.
But whether that ye dwelle or for him go,
I am, til god me bettre minde sende,
At dulcarnon, right at my wittes ende.'

134. Quod Pandarus, 'ye, nece, wol ye here?
Dulcarnon called is "fleminge of wrecches";
It semeth hard, for wrecches wol not lere
For verray slouthe or othere wilful tecches;
This seyd by hem that be not worth two fecches.
But ye ben wys, and that we han on honde
Nis neither hard, ne skilful to withstonde.'

135. 'Thanne, eem,' quod she, 'doth her-of as yow list;
But er he come I wil up first aryse;
And, for the love of god, sin al my trist
Is on yow two, and ye ben bothe wyse,
So wircheth now in so discreet a wyse,
That I honour may have, and he plesaunce;
For I am here al in your governaunce.'

136. 'That is wel seyd,' quod he, 'my nece dere,
Ther good thrift on that wyse gentil herte!
But liggeth stille, and taketh him right here,
It nedeth not no ferther for him sterte;
And ech of yow ese otheres sorwes smerte,
For love of god; and, Venus, I thee herie;
For sone hope I we shulle ben alle merie.'

137. This Troilus ful sone on knees him sette
Ful sobrely, right by hir beddes heed,

And in his beste wyse his lady grette;
But lord, so she wex sodeynliche reed!
Ne, though men sholden smyten of hir heed,
She coude nought a word a-right out-bringe
So sodeynly, for his sodeyn cominge.

138. But Pandarus, that so wel coude fele
In every thing, to pleye anoon bigan,
And seyde, 'nece, see how this lord can knele!
Now, for your trouthe, seeth this gentil man!'
And with that word he for a quisshen ran,
And seyde, 'kneleth now, whyl that yow leste,
Ther god your hertes bringe sone at reste!'

139. Can I not seyn, for she bad him not ryse,
If sorwe it putte out of hir remembraunce,
Or elles if she toke it in the wyse
Of duëtee, as for his observaunce;
But wel finde I she dide him this plesaunce,
That she him kiste, al-though she syked sore;
And bad him sitte a-doun without-outen more.

140. Quod Pandarus, 'now wol ye wel biginne;
Now doth him sitte, gode nece dere,
Upon your beddes syde al there with-inne,
That ech of yow the bet may other here.'
And with that word he drow him to the fere,
And took a light, and fond his contenaunce
As for to loke up-on an old romaunce.

141. Criseyde, that was Troilus lady right,
And cleer stood on a ground of sikernesse,
Al thoughte she, hir servaunt and hir knight
Ne sholde of right non untrouthe in hir gesse,
Yet nathelees, considered his distresse,
And that love is in cause of swich folye,
Thus to him spak she of his Ielousye:

142. 'Lo, herte myn, as wolde the excellence
Of love, ayeins the which that no man may,
Ne oughte eek goodly maken resistence;
And eek bycause I felte wel and say
Your grete trouthe, and servyse every day;
And that your herte al myn was, sooth to seyne,
This droof me for to rewe up-on your peyne.

143. And your goodnesse have I founde alwey yit,
Of whiche, my dere herte and al my knight,
I thonke it yow, as fer as I have wit,
Al can I nought as muche as it were right;
And I, enforth my conninge and my might,
Have and ay shal, how sore that me smerte,
Ben to yow trewe and hool, with al myn herte;

144. And dredelees, that shal be founde at preve.—
But, herte myn, what al this is to seyne
Shal wel be told, so that ye noght yow greve,
Though I to yow right on yourself compleyne.

For ther-with mene I fynally the peyne,
That halt your herte and myn in hevinesse,
Fully to sleen and every wrong redresse.

145. My goode, myn, not I for-why ne how
That Ialousye, allas! that wikked wivere,
Thus causelees is cropen in-to yow;
The harm of which I wolde fayn delivere!
Allas! that he, al hool, or of him slivere,
Shuld have his refut in so digne a place,
Ther Iove him sone out of your herte arace!

146. But O, thou Iove, O auctor of nature,
Is this an honour to thy deitee,
That folk ungiltif suffren here iniure,
And who that giltif is, al quit goth he?
O were it leful for to pleyne on thee,
That undeserved suffrest Ialousye,
And that I wolde up-on thee pleyne and crye!

147. Eek al my wo is this, that folk now usen
To seyn right thus, "ye, Ialousye is love!"
And wolde a busshel venim al excusen,
For that o greyn of love is on it shove!
But that wot heighe god that sit above,
If it be lyker love, or hate, or grame;
And after that, it oughte bere his name.

148. But certeyn is, som maner Ialousye
Is excusable more than som, y-wis.
As whan cause is, and som swich fantasye
With pietee so wel repressed is,
That it unnethe dooth or seyth amis,
But goodly drinketh up al his distresse;
And that excuse I, for the gentilesse.

149. And som so ful of furie is and despyt,
That it sourmounteth his repressioun;
But herte myn, ye be not in that plyt,
That thanke I god, for whiche your passioun
I wol not calle it but illusioun,
Of habundaunce of love and bisy cure,
That dooth your herte this disese endure.

150. Of which I am right sory, but not wrooth;
But, for my devoir and your hertes reste,
Wher-so yow list, by ordal or by ooth,
By sort, or in what wyse so yow leste,
For love of god, lat preve it for the beste!
And if that I be giltif, do me deye,
Allas! what mighte I more doon or seye?'

151. With that a fewe brighte teres newe
Out of hir eyen fille, and thus she seyde,
'Now god, thou wost, in thought ne dede untrewe
To Troilus was never yet Criseyde.'
With that hir heed doun in the bed she leyde,
And with the shete it wreigh, and syghed sore,
And held hir pees; not o word spak she more.

152. But now help god to quenchen al this sorwe,
So hope I that he shal, for he best may;

For I have seyn, of a ful misty morwe
Folwen ful ofte a mery someres day;
And after winter folweth grene May.
Men seen alday, and reden eek in stories,
That after sharpe shoures been victories.

153. This Troilus, whan he hir wordes herde,
Have ye no care, him liste not to slepe;
For it thoughte him no strokes of a yerde
To here or seen Criseyde his lady wepe;
But wel he felte aboute his herte crepe,
For every teer which that Criseyde asterte,
The crampe of deeth, to streyne him by the herte.

154. And in his minde he gan the tyme acurse
That he cam therë, and that he was born;
For now is wikke y-turned in-to worse,
And al that labour he hath doon biforn,
He wende it lost, he thoughte he nas but lorn.
'O Pandarus,' thoughte he, 'allas! thy wyle
Serveth of nought, so weylawey the whyle!'

155. And therwithal he heng a-doun the heed,
And fil on knees, and sorwfully he sighte;
What mighte he seyn? he felte he nas but deed,
For wrooth was she that shulde his sorwes lighte.
But nathelees, whan that he speken mighte,
Than seyde he thus, 'god woot, that of this game,
Whan al is wist, than am I not to blame!'

156. Ther-with the sorwe so his herte shette,
That from his eyen fil ther not a tere,
And every spirit his vigour in-knette,
So they astoned and oppressed were.
The feling of his sorwe, or of his fere,
Or of ought elles, fled was out of towne;
And doun he fel al sodeynly a-swowne.

157. This was no litel sorwe for to see;
But al was hust, and Pandare up as faste,
'O nece, pees, or we be lost,' quod he,
'Beth nought agast;' but certeyn, at the laste,
For this or that, he in-to bedde him caste,
And seyde, 'O theef, is this a mannes herte?'
And of he rente al to his bare sherte;

158. And seyde, 'nece, but ye helpe us now,
Allas, your owne Troilus is lorn!'
'Y-wis, so wolde I, and I wiste how,
Ful fayn,' quod she; 'allas! that I was born!'
'Ye, nece, wol ye pullen out the thorn
That stiketh in his herte?' quod Pandare;
'Sey "al foryeve," and stint is al this fare!'

159. 'Ye, that to me,' quod she, 'ful lever were
Than al the good the sonne aboute gooth';
And therwith-al she swoor him in his ere,

Y-wis, my dere herte, I am nought wrooth,
Have here my trouthe and many another ooth;
Now speek to me, for it am I, Cryseyde!'
But al for nought; yet mighte he not a-breyde.

160. Therwith his pous and pawmes of his hondes
They gan to frote, and wete his temples tweyne,
And, to deliveren him from bittre bondes,
She ofte him kiste; and, shortly for to seyne,
Him to revoken she dide al hir peyne.
And at the laste, he gan his breeth to drawe,
And of his swough sone after that adawe,

161. And gan bet minde and reson to him take,
But wonder sore he was abayst, y-wis.
And with a syk, whan he gan bet a-wake,
He seyde, 'O mercy, god, what thing is this?'
'Why do ye with your-selven thus amis?'
Quod tho Criseyde, 'is this a mannes game?
What, Troilus! wol ye do thus, for shame?'

162. And therwith-al hir arm over him she leyde,
And al foryaf, and ofte tyme him keste.
He thonked hir, and to hir spak, and seyde
As fil to purpos for his herte reste.
And she to that answerde him as hir leste;
And with hir goodly wordes him disporte
She gan, and ofte his sorwes to comforte.

163. Quod Pandarus, 'for ought I can espyen,
This light nor I ne serven here of nought;
Light is not good for syke folkes yën.
But for the love of god, sin ye be brought
In thus good plyt, lat now non hevy thought
Ben hanginge in the hertes of yow tweye:'
And bar the candele to the chimeneye.

164. Sone after this, though it no nede were,
Whan she swich othes as hir list devyse
Hadde of him take, hir thoughte tho no fere,
Ne cause eek non, to bidde him thennes ryse.
Yet lesse thing than othes may suffyse
In many a cas; for every wight, I gesse,
That loveth wel meneth but gentilesse.

165. But in effect she wolde wite anoon
Of what man, and eek where, and also why
He Ielous was, sin ther was cause noon;
And eek the signe, that he took it by,
She bad him that to telle hir bisily,
Or elles, certeyn, she bar him on honde,
That this was doon of malis, hir to fonde.

166. With-outen more, shortly for to seyne,
He moste obeye un-to his lady heste;
And for the lasse harm, he moste feyne.
He seyde hir, whan she was at swiche a feste
She mighte on him han loked at the leste;

Not I not what, al dere y-nough a risshe,
As he that nedes moste a cause fisshe.

167. And she answerde, 'swete, al were it so,
What harm was that, sin I non yvel mene?
For, by that god that boughte us bothe two,
In alle thinge is myn entente clene.
Swich arguments ne been not worth a bene;
Wol ye the childish Ialous contrefete?
Now were it worthy that ye were y-bete.'

168. Tho Troilus gan sorwfully to syke,
Lest she be wrooth, him thoughte his herte deyde;
And seyde, 'allas! upon my sorwes syke
Have mercy, swete herte myn, Cryseyde!
And if that, in tho wordes that I seyde,
Be any wrong, I wol no more trespace;
Do what yow list, I am al in your grace.'

169. And she answerde, 'of gilt misericorde!
That is to seyn, that I foryeve al this;
And ever-more on this night yow recorde,
And beth wel war ye do no more amis.'
'Nay, dere herte myn,' quod he, 'y-wis.'
'And now,' quod she, 'that I have do yow smerte,
Foryeve it me, myn owene swete herte.'

170. This Troilus, with blisse of that supprysed,
Put al in goddes hond, as he that mente
No-thing but wel; and, sodeynly avysed,
He hir in armes faste to him hente.
And Pandarus, with a ful good entente,
Leyde him to slepe, and seyde, 'if ye ben wyse,
Swonneth not now, lest more folk aryse.'

171. What mighte or may the sely larke seye,
Whan that the sparhauk hath it in his foot?
I can no more, but of thise ilke tweye,
To whom this tale sucre be or soot,
Though that I tarie a yeer, somtyme I moot,
After myn auctor, tellen hir gladnesse,
As wel as I have told hir hevinesse.

172. Criseyde, which that felte hir thus y-take,
As writen clerkes in hir bokes olde,
Right as an aspes leef she gan to quake,
Whan she him felte hir in his armes folde.
But Troilus, al hool of cares colde,
Gan thanken tho the blisful goddes sevene;
Thus sondry peynes bringen folk to hevene.

173. This Troilus in armes gan hir streyne.
And seyde, 'O swete, as ever mote I goon,
Now be ye caught, now is ther but we tweyne;
Now yeldeth yow, for other boot is noon.'
To that Criseyde answerde thus anoon,
'Ne hadde I er now, my swete herte dere,
Ben yolde, y-wis I were now not here!'

174. O! sooth is seyd, that heled for to be

As of a fevre or othere greet syknesse,
Men moste drinke, as men may often see,
Ful bittre drink; and for to han gladnesse,
Men drinken often peyne and greet distresse;
I mene it here, as for this aventure,
That thourgh a peyne hath founden al his cure.

175. And now swetnesse semeth more swete,
That bitternesse assayed was biforn;
For out of wo in blisse now they flete.
Non swich they felten, sith they were born;
Now is this bet, than bothe two be lorn!
For love of god, take every woman hede
To werken thus, if it comth to the nede.

176. Criseyde, al quit from every drede and tene,
As she that iuste cause hadde him to triste,
Made him swich feste, it Ioye was to sene,
Whan she his trouthe and clene entente wiste.
And as aboute a tree, with many a twiste,
Bitrent and wryth the sote wodebinde,
Gan eche of hem in armes other winde.

177. And as the newe abaysshed nightingale,
That stinteth first whan she biginneth singe,
Whan that she hereth any herde tale,
Or in the hegges any wight stiringe,
And after siker dooth hir voys outringe;
Right so Criseyde, whan hir drede stente,
Opned hir herte, and tolde him hir entente.

178. And right as he that seeth his deeth y-shapen,
And deye moot, in ought that he may gesse,
And sodeynly rescous doth him escapen,
And from his deeth is brought in sikernesse,
For al this world, in swich present gladnesse
Was Troilus, and hath his lady swete;
With worse hap god lat us never mete!

179. Hir armes smale, hir streyghte bak and softe,
Hir sydes longe, fleshly, smothe, and whyte
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad ful ofte
Hir snowish throte, hir brestes rounde and lyte;
Thus in this hevene he gan him to delyte,
And ther-with-al a thousand tyme hir kiste;
That, what to done, for Ioye unnethe he wiste.

180. Than seyde he thus, 'O, Love, O, Charitee,
Thy moder eek, Citherea the swete,
After thy-self next heried be she,
Venus mene I, the wel-willy planete;
And next that, Imenëus, I thee grete;
For never man was to yow goddes holde
As I, which ye han brought fro cares colde.

181. Benigne Love, thou holy bond of thinges,
Who-so wol grace, and list thee nought honouren,

Lo, his desyr wol flee with-outen winges.
For, noldestow of bountee hem socouren
That serven best and most alwey labouren,
Yet were al lost, that dar I wel seyn, certes,
But-if thy grace passed our desertes.

182. And for thou me, that coude leest deserve
Of hem that nombred been un-to thy grace,
Hast holpen, ther I lykly was to sterve,
And me bistowed in so heygh a place
That thilke boundes may no blisse pace,
I can no more, but laude and reverence
Be to thy bounte and thyn excellence!'

183. And therwith-al Criseyde anoon he kiste,
Of which, certeyn, she felte no disese.
And thus seyde he, 'now wolde god I wiste,
Myn herte swete, how I yow mighte plese!
What man,' quod he, 'was ever thus at ese
As I, on whiche the faireste and the beste
That ever I say, deyneth hir herte reste.

184. Here may men seen that mercy passeth right;
The experience of that is felt in me,
That am unworthy to so swete a wight.
But herte myn, of your benignitee,
So thenketh, though that I unworthy be,
Yet mot I nede amenden in som wyse,
Right thourgh the vertu of your heyghe servyse.

185. And for the love of god, my lady dere,
Sin god hath wrought me for I shal yow serve,
As thus I mene, that ye wol be my stere,
To do me live, if that yow liste, or sterve,
So techeth me how that I may deserve
Your thank, so that I, thurgh myn ignoraunce,
Ne do no-thing that yow be displesaunce.

186. For certes, fresshe wommanliche wyf,
This dar I seye, that trouthe and diligence,
That shal ye finden in me al my lyf,
Ne I wol not, certeyn, breken your defence;
And if I do, present or in absence,
For love of god, lat slee me with the dede,
If that it lyke un-to your womanhede.'

187. 'Y-wis,' quod she, 'myn owne hertes list,
My ground of ese, and al myn herte dere,
Graunt mercy, for on that is al my trist;
But late us falle awey fro this matere;
For it suffyseth, this that seyd is here.
And at o word, with-outen repentaunce,
Wel-come, my knight, my pees, my suffisaunce!'

188. Of hir delyt, or Ioyes oon the leste
Were impossible to my wit to seye;
But iuggeth, ye that han ben at the feste
Of swich gladnesse, if that hem liste pleye!
I can no more, but thus thise ilke tweye
That night, be-twixen dreed and sikernesse,

Felten in love the grete worthinesse.

189. O blisful night, of hem so longe y-sought,
How blithe un-to hem bothe two thou were!
Why ne hadde I swich on with my soule y-bought,
Ye, or the leeste Ioye that was there?
A-wey, thou foule daunger and thou fere,
And lat hem in this hevene blisse dwelle,
That is so heygh, that al ne can I telle!

190. But sooth is, though I can not tellen al,
As can myn auctor, of his excellence,
Yet have I seyd, and, god to-forn, I shal
In every thing al hoolly his sentence.
And if that I, at loves reverence,
Have any word in eched for the beste,
Doth therwith-al right as yourselven leste.

191. For myne wordes, here and every part,
I speke hem alle under correccioun
Of yow, that feling han in loves art,
And putte it al in your discrecioun
To encrese or maken diminucioun
Of my langage, and that I yow biseche;
But now to purpos of my rather speche.

192. Thise ilke two, that ben in armes laft,
So looth to hem a-sonder goon it were,
That ech from other wende been biraft,
Or elles, lo, this was hir moste fere,
That al this thing but nyce dremes were;
For which ful ofte ech of hem seyde, 'O swete,
Clippe ich yow thus, or elles I it mete?'

193. And, lord! so he gan goodly on hir see,
That never his look ne bleynte from hir face,
And seyde, 'O dere herte, may it be
That it be sooth, that ye ben in this place?'
'Ye, herte myn, god thank I of his grace!'
Quod tho Criseyde, and therwith-al him kiste,
That where his spirit was, for Ioye he niste.

194. This Troilus ful ofte hir eyen two
Gan for to kisse, and seyde, 'O eyen clere,
It were ye that wroughte me swich wo,
Ye humble nettes of my lady dere!
Though ther be mercy writen in your chere,
God wot, the text ful hard is, sooth, to finde,
How coude ye with-outen bond me binde?'

195. Therwith he gan hir faste in armes take,
And wel an hundred tymes gan he syke,
Nought swiche sorwful sykes as men make
For wo, or elles whan that folk ben syke,
But esy sykes, swiche as been to lyke,
That shewed his affeccioun withinne;
Of swiche sykes coude he nought bilinne.

196. Sone after this they speke of sondry thinges,
As fil to purpos of this aventure,
And pleyinge entrechaungeden hir ringes,
Of which I can nought tellen no scripture;

But wel I woot a broche, gold and asure,
In whiche a ruby set was lyk an herte,
Criseyde him yaf, and stak it on his sherte.

197. Lord! trowe ye, a coveitous, a wrecche,
That blameth love and holt of it despyt,
That, of tho pens that he can mokre and kecche,
Was ever yet y-yeve him swich delyt,
As is in love, in oo poynt, in som plyt?
Nay, doutelees, for also god me save,
So parfit Ioye may no nigard have!

198. They wol sey 'yis,' but lord! so that they lye,
Tho bisy wrecches, ful of wo and drede!
They callen love a woodnesse or folye,
But it shal falle hem as I shal yow rede;
They shul forgo the whyte and eke the rede,
And live in wo, ther god yeve hem mischaunce,
And every lover in his trouthe avaunce!

199. As wolde god, tho wrecches, that dispyse
Servyse of love, hadde eres al-so longe
As hadde Myda, ful of coveityse;
And ther-to dronken hadde as hoot and stronge
As Crassus dide for his affectis wronge,
To techen hem that they ben in the vyce,
And loveres nought, al-though they holde hem nyce!

200. Thise ilke two, of whom that I yow seye,
Whan that hir hertes wel assured were
Tho gonne they to speken and to pleye,
And eek rehercen how, and whanne, and where,
They knewe hem first, and every wo and fere
That passed was; but al swich hevinesse,
I thanke it god, was tourned to gladnesse.

201. And ever-mo, whan that hem fel to speke
Of any thing of swich a tyme agoon,
With kissing al that tale sholde breke,
And fallen in a newe Ioye anoon,
And diden al hir might, sin they were oon,
For to recoveren blisse and been at ese,
And passed wo with Ioye countrepeyse.

202. Reson wil not that I speke of sleep,
For it accordeth nought to my matere;
God woot, they toke of that ful litel keep,
But lest this night, that was to hem so dere,
Ne sholde in veyn escape in no manere,
It was biset in Ioye and bisinesse
Of al that souneth in-to gentilnesse.

203. But whan the cok, comune astrologer,
Gan on his brest to bete, and after crowe,
And Lucifer, the dayes messager,
Gan for to ryse, and out hir bemes throwe;
And estward roos, to him that coude it knowe,
Fortuna maior, [than] anoon Criseyde,
With herte sore, to Troilus thus seyde:—

204. 'Myn hertes lyf, my trist and my plesaunce,
That I was born, allas! what me is wo,
That day of us mot make dessever-aunce!
For tyme it is to ryse, and hennes go,
Or elles I am lost for evermo!
O night, allas! why niltow over us hove,
As longe as whanne Almena lay by Iove?

205. O blake night, as folk in bokes rede,
That shapen art by god this world to hyde
At certeyn tymes with thy derke wede,
That under that men mighte in reste abyde,
Wel oughte bestes pleyne, and folk thee chyde,
That there-as day with labour wolde us breste,
That thou thus fleest, and deynest us nought reste!

206. Thou dost, allas! to shortly thyn offyce,
Thou rakel night, ther god, makere of kinde,
Thee, for thyn hast and thyn unkinde vyce,
So faste ay to our hemi-spere binde,
That never-more under the ground thou winde!
For now, for thou so hyest out of Troye,
Have I forgon thus hastily my Ioye!'

207. This Troilus, that with tho wordes felte,
As thoughte him tho, for pietous distresse,
The blody teres from his herte melte,
As he that never yet swich hevinesse
Assayed hadde, out of so greet gladnesse,
Gan therwith-al Criseyde his lady dere
In armes streyne, and seyde in this manere:—

208. 'O cruel day, accusour of the Ioye
That night and love han stole and faste y-wryen,
A-cursed be thy coming in-to Troye,
For every bore hath oon of thy bright yën!
Envyous day, what list thee so to spyen?
What hastow lost, why sekestow this place,
Ther god thy lyght so quenche, for his grace?

209. Allas! what han thise loveres thee agilt,
Dispitous day? thyn be the pyne of helle!
For many a lovere hastow shent, and wilt;
Thy pouring in wol no-wher lete hem dwelle.
What proferestow thy light here for to selle?
Go selle it hem that smale seles graven,
We wol thee nought, us nedeth no day haven.'

210. And eek the sonne Tytan gan he chyde,
And seyde, 'O fool, wel may men thee dispyse.
That hast the Dawing al night by thy syde,
And suffrest hir so sone up fro thee ryse,
For to disesen loveres in this wyse.
What! hold your bed ther, thou, and eek thy Morwe!
I bidde god, so yeve yow bothe sorwe!'

211. Therwith ful sore he sighte, and thus he seyde,
'My lady right, and of my wele or wo

The welle and rote, O goodly myn, Criseyde,
And shal I ryse, allas! and shal I go?
Now fele I that myn herte moot a-two!
For how sholde I my lyf an houre save,
Sin that with yow is al the lyf I have?

212. What shal I doon, for certes, I not how,
Ne whanne, allas! I shal the tyme see,
That in this plyt I may be eft with yow;
And of my lyf, god woot, how that shal be,
Sin that desyr right now so byteth me,
That I am deed anoon, but I retourne.
How sholde I longe, allas! fro yow soiourne?

213. But nathelees, myn owene lady bright,
Yit were it so that I wiste outrely,
That I, your humble servaunt and your knight,
Were in your herte set so fermely
As ye in myn, the which thing, trewely,
Me lever were than thise worldes tweyne,
Yet sholde I bet enduren al my peyne.'

214. To that Cryseyde answerde right anoon,
And with a syk she seyde, 'O herte dere,
The game, y-wis, so ferforth now is goon,
That first shal Phebus falle fro his spere,
And every egle been the dowves fere,
And every roche out of his place sterte,
Er Troilus out of Criseydes herte!

215. Ye be so depe in-with myn herte grave,
That, though I wolde it turne out of my thought,
As wisly verray god my soule save,
To dyen in the peyne, I coude nought!
And, for the love of god that us hath wrought,
Lat in your brayn non other fantasye
So crepe, that it cause me to dye!

216. And that ye me wolde han as faste in minde
As I have yow, that wolde I yow bi-seche;
And, if I wiste soothly that to finde,
God mighte not a poynt my Ioyes eche!
But, herte myn, with-oute more speche,
Beth to me trewe, or elles were it routhe;
For I am thyn, by god and by my trouthe!

217. Beth glad for-thy, and live in sikernesse;
Thus seyde I never er this, ne shal to mo;
And if to yow it were a gret gladnesse
To turne ayein, soone after that ye go,
As fayn wolde I as ye, it were so,
As wisly god myn herte bringe at reste!'
And him in armes took, and ofte keste.

218. Agayns his wil, sin it mot nedes be,
This Troilus up roos, and faste him cledde,
And in his armes took his lady free
An hundred tyme, and on his wey him spedde,
And with swich wordes as his herte bledde,
He seyde, 'farewel, my dere herte swete,

Ther god us graunte sounde and sone to mete!'

219. To which no word for sorwe she answerde,
So sore gan his parting hir destreyne;
And Troilus un-to his palays ferde.
As woo bigon as she was, sooth to seyne;
So hard him wrong of sharp desyr the peyne
For to ben eft there he was in plesaunce,
That it may never out of his remembraunce.

220. Retorned to his real palais, sone
He softe in-to his bed gan for to slinke,
To slepe longe, as he was wont to done,
But al for nought; he may wel ligge and winke,
But sleep ne may ther in his herte sinke;
Thenkinge how she, for whom desyr him brende,
A thousand-fold was worth more than he wende.

221. And in his thought gan up and doun to winde
Hir wordes alle, and every contenaunce,
And fermely impressen in his minde
The leste poynt that to him was plesaunce;
And verrayliche, of thilke remembraunce,
Desyr al newe him brende, and lust to brede
Gan more than erst, and yet took he none hede.

222. Criseyde also, right in the same wyse,
Of Troilus gan in hir herte shette
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedes wyse,
His gentilesse, and how she with him mette,
Thonkinge love he so wel hir bisette;
Desyring eft to have hir herte dere
In swich a plyt, she dorste make him chere.

223. Pandare, a-morwe which that comen was
Un-to his nece, and gan hir fayre grete,
Seyde, 'al this night so reyned it, allas!
That al my drede is that ye, nece swete,
Han litel layser had to slepe and mete;
Al night,' quod he, 'hath reyn so do me wake,
That som of us, I trowe, hir hedes ake.'

224. And ner he com, and seyde, 'how stont it now
This mery morwe, nece, how can ye fare?'
Criseyde answerde, 'never the bet for yow,
Fox that ye been, god yeve your herte care!
God helpe me so, ye caused al this fare,
Trow I,' quod she, 'for alle your wordes whyte;
O! who-so seeth yow knoweth yow ful lyte!'

225. With that she gan hir face for to wrye
With the shete, and wex for shame al reed;
And Pandarus gan under for to prye,
And seyde, 'nece, if that I shal ben deed,
Have here a swerd, and smyteth of myn heed.'
With that his arm al sodeynly he thriste
Under hir nekke, and at the laste hir kiste.

226. I passe al that which chargeth nought to seye,

What! God foryaf his deeth, and she al-so
Foryaf, and with hir uncle gan to pleye,
For other cause was ther noon than so.
But of this thing right to the effect to go,
Whan tyme was, hom til hir hous she wente,
And Pandarus hath fully his entente.

227. Now torne we ayein to Troilus,
That resteles ful longe a-bedde lay,
And prevely sente after Pandarus,
To him to come in al the haste he may.
He com anoon, nought ones seyde he 'nay,'
And Troilus ful soberly he grette,
And doun upon his beddes syde him sette.

228. This Troilus, with al the affeccioun
Of frendes love that herte may devyse,
To Pandarus on kneës fil adoun,
And er that he wolde of the place aryse,
He gan him thonken in his beste wyse;
A hondred sythe he gan the tyme blesse,
That he was born to bringe him fro distresse.

229. He seyde, 'O frend, of frendes the alderbeste
That ever was, the sothe for to telle,
Thou hast in hevene y-brought my soule at reste
Fro Flegiton, the fery flood of helle;
That, though I mighte a thousand tymes selle,
Upon a day, my lyf in thy servyse,
It mighte nought a mote in that suffyse.

230. The sonne, which that al the world may see,
Saw never yet, my lyf, that dar I leye,
So inly fair and goodly as is she,
Whos I am al, and shal, til that I deye;
And, that I thus am hires, dar I seye,
That thanked be the heighe worthinesse
Of love, and eek thy kinde bisinesse.

231. Thus hastow me no litel thing y-yive,
Fo which to thee obliged be for ay
My lyf, and why? for thorugh thyn help I live;
For elles deed hadde I be many a day.'
And with that word doun in his bed he lay,
And Pandarus ful sobrely him herde
Til al was seyd, and thanne he him answerde:

232. 'My dere frend, if I have doon for thee
In any cas, god wot, it is me leef;
And am as glad as man may of it be,
God help me so; but tak now not a-greef
That I shal seyn, be war of this myscheef,
That, there-as thou now brought art in-to blisse,
That thou thy-self ne cause it nought to misse.

233. For of fortunes sharp adversitee
The worst kinde of infortune is this,
A man to have ben in prosperitee,
And it remembren, when it passed is.

Thou art wys y-nough, for-thy do nought amis;
Be not to rakel, though thou sitte warme,
For if thou be, certeyn, it wol thee harme.

234. Thou art at ese, and holde thee wel ther-inne.
For also seur as reed is every fyr,
As greet a craft is kepe wel as winne;
Brydle alwey wel thy speche and thy desyr.
For worldly Ioye halt not but by a wyr;
That preveth wel, it brest alday so ofte;
For-thy nede is to werke with it softe.'

235. Quod Troilus, 'I hope, and god to-forn,
My dere frend, that I shal so me bere,
That in my gilt ther shal no thing be lorn,
Ne I nil not rakle as for to greven here;
It nedeth not this matere ofte tere;
For wistestow myn herte wel Pandare,
God woot, of this thou woldest litel care.'

236. Tho gan he telle him of his glade night.
And wher-of first his herte dredde, and how,
And seyde, 'freend, as I am trewe knight,
And by that feyth I shal to god and yow,
I hadde it never half so hote as now;
And ay the more that desyr me byteth
To love hir best, the more it me delyteth.

237. I noot my-self not wisly what it is;
But now I fele a newe qualitee,
Ye, al another than I dide er this.'
Pandare answerde, and seyde thus, that he
That ones may in hevene blisse be,
He feleth other weyes, dar I leye,
Than thilke tyme he first herde of it seye.

238. This is o word for al; this Troilus
Was never ful, to speke of this matere,
And for to preysen un-to Pandarus
The bountee of his righte lady dere,
And Pandarus to thanke and maken chere.
This tale ay was span-newe to biginne
Til that the night departed hem a-twinne.

239. Sone after this, for that fortune it wolde,
I-comen was the blisful tyme swete,
That Troilus was warned that he sholde,
Ther he was erst, Criseyde his lady mete;
For which he felte his herte in Ioye flete;
And feythfully gan alle the goddes herie;
And lat see now if that he can be merie.

240. And holden was the forme and al the wyse,
Of hir cominge, and eek of his also,
As it was erst, which nedeth nought devyse.
But playnly to the effect right for to go,
In Ioye and seurte Pandarus hem two
A-bedde broughte, whan hem bothe leste,
And thus they ben in quiete and in reste.

241. Nought nedeth it to yow, sin they ben met,
To aske at me if that they blythe were;
For if it erst was wel, tho was it bet
A thousand-fold, this nedeth not enquere.
A-gon was every sorwe and every fere;
And bothe, y-wis, they hadde, and so they wende,
As muche Ioye as herte may comprende.

242. This is no litel thing of for to seye,
This passeth every wit for to devyse;
For eche of hem gan otheres lust obeye;
Felicitee, which that thise clerkes wyse
Commenden so, ne may not here suffyse.
This Ioye may not writen been with inke,
This passeth al that herte may bithinke.

243. But cruel day, so wel-awey the stounde!
Gan for to aproche, as they by signes knewe,
For whiche hem thoughte felen dethes wounde;
So wo was hem, that changen gan hir hewe,
And day they gonnen to dispyse al newe,
Calling it traytour, envyous, and worse,
And bitterly the dayes light they curse.

244. Quod Troilus, 'allas! now am I war
That Pirous and tho swifte stedes three,
Whiche that drawen forth the sonnes char,
Han goon som by-path in despyt of me;
That maketh it so sone day to be;
And, for the sonne him hasteth thus to ryse,
Ne shal I never doon him sacrifyse!'

245. But nedes day departe moste hem sone,
And whanne hir speche doon was and hir chere,
They twinne anoon as they were wont to done,
And setten tyme of meting eft y-fere;
And many a night they wroughte in this manere.
And thus Fortune a tyme ladde in Ioye
Criseyde, and eek this kinges sone of Troye.

246. In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singinges,
This Troilus gan al his lyf to lede;
He spendeth, Iusteth, maketh festeyinges;
He yeveth frely ofte, and chaungeth wede,
And held aboute him alwey, out of drede,
A world of folk, as cam him wel of kinde,
The fressheste and the beste he coude fynde;

247. That swich a voys was of hym and a stevene
Thorugh-out the world, of honour and largesse,
That it up rong un-to the yate of hevene.
And, as in love, he was in swich gladnesse,
That in his herte he demede, as I gesse,
That there nis lovere in this world at ese
So wel as he, and thus gan love him plese.

248. The godlihede or beautee which that kinde
In any other lady hadde y-set

Can not the mountaunce of a knot unbinde,
A-boute his herte, of al Criseydes net.
He was so narwe y-masked and y-knet,
That it undon on any manere syde,
That nil not been, for ought that may betyde. 1736

249. And by the hond ful ofte he wolde take
This Pandarus, and in-to gardin lede,
And swich a feste and swich a proces make
Him of Criseyde, and of hir womanhede, 1740
And of hir beautee, that, without-outen drede,
It was an hevene his wordes for to here;
And thanne he wolde singe in this manere.

250. 'Love, that of erthe and see hath governaunce,
Love, that his hestes hath in hevene hye, 1745
Love, that with an holsom alliaunce
Halt peples ioyned, as him list hem gye,
Love, that knetteth lawe of compayne,
And couples doth in vertu for to dwelle,
Bind this acord, that I have told and telle; 1750

251. That that the world with feyth, which that is stable,
Dyverseth so his stoundes concordinge,
That elements that been so discordable
Holden a bond perpetuely duringe,
That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bringe, 1755
And that the mone hath lordship over the nightes,
Al this doth Love; ay heried be his mightes!

252. That that the see, that gredy is to flowen,
Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so
His flodes, that so fersly they ne growen 1760
To drenchen erthe and al for ever-mo;
And if that Love ought lete his brydel go,
Al that now loveth a-sonder sholde lepe,
And lost were al, that Love halt now to-hepe.

253. So wolde god, that auctor is of kinde, 1765
That, with his bond, Love of his vertu liste
To cerclen hertes alle, and faste binde,
That from his bond no wight the wey out wiste.
And hertes colde, hem wolde I that he twiste
To make hem love, and that hem leste ay rewe 1770
On hertes sore, and kepe hem that ben trewe.'

254. In alle nedes, for the tounes werre,
He was, and ay the firste in armes dight;
And certeynly, but-if that bokes erre,
Save Ector, most y-drad of any wight; 1775
And this encrees of hardinesse and might
Cam him of love, his ladies thank to winne,
That altered his spirit so with-inne.

255. In tyme of trewe, on haukinge wolde he ryde,
Or elles hunten boor, bere, or lyoun; 1780
The smale bestes leet he gon by-syde.
And whan that he com rydinge in-to toun,
Ful ofte his lady, from hir window doun,

As fresh as faucon comen out of muwe,
Ful redy was, him goodly to saluwe.

256. And most of love and vertu was his speche,
And in despyt hadde alle wrecchednesse;
And doutelees, no nede was him biseche
To honouren hem that hadde worthinesse,
And esen hem that weren in distresse.
And glad was he if any wight wel ferde,
That lover was, whan he it wiste or herde.

257. For sooth to seyn, he lost held every wight
But-if he were in loves heigh servyse,
I mene folk that oughte it been of right.
And over al this, so wel coude he devyse
Of sentement, and in so unkouth wyse
Al his array, that every lover thoughte,
That al was wel, what-so he seyde or wroughte.

258. And though that he be come of blood royal,
Him liste of pryde at no wight for to chase;
Benigne he was to ech in general,
For which he gat him thank in every place.
Thus wolde Love, y-heried be his grace,
That Pryde, Envye, Ire, and Avaryce
He gan to flee, and every other vyce.

259. Thou lady bright, the doughter to Dione,
Thy blinde and winged sone eek, daun Cupyde;
Ye sustren nyne eek, that by Elicone
In hil Parnaso listen for to abyde,
That ye thus fer han deyned me to gyde,
I can no more, but sin that ye wol wende,
Ye heried been for ay, with-outen ende!

260. Thourgh yow have I seyd fully in my song
Theffect and Ioye of Troilus servyse,
Al be that ther was som disese among,
As to myn auctor listeth to devyse.
My thridde book now ende ich in this wyse;
And Troilus in luste and in quiete
Is with Criseyde, his owne herte swete.

Explicit Liber Tercius.

BOOK IV.

[PROHEMIUM.]

1. BUT al to litel, weylawey the whyle,
Lasteth swich Ioye, y-thonked be Fortune!
That semeth trewest, whan she wol bygyle,
And can to foles so hir song entune,
That she hem hent and blent, traytour comune;
And whan a wight is from hir wheel y-throwe,
Than laugheth she, and maketh him the mowe.

2. From Troilus she gan hir brighte face

Awey to wrythe, and took of him non hede,
But caste him clene oute of his lady grace,
And on hir wheel she sette up Diomede;
For which right now myn herte ginneth blede,
And now my penne, allas! with which I wryte,
Quaketh for drede of that I moot endyte.

3. For how Criseyde Troilus forsook,
Or at the leste, how that she was unkinde,
Mot hennes-forth ben matere of my book,
As wryten folk thorugh which it is in minde.
Allas! that they shulde ever cause finde
To speke hir harm; and if they on hir lye,
Y-wis, hem-self sholde han the vilanye.

4. O ye Herines, Nightes doughtren three,
That endelees compleynen ever in pyne,
Megera, Alete, and eek Thesiphone;
Thou cruel Mars eek, fader to Quirryne,
This ilke ferthe book me helpeth fyne,
So that the los of lyf and love y-fere
Of Troilus be fully shewed here.

Explicit [*Prohemium.*]

INCIPIT QUARTUS LIBER.

5. LIGGINGE in ost, as I have seyd er this,
The Grekes stronge, aboute Troye toun,
Bifel that, whan that Phebus shyning is
Up-on the brest of Hercules Lyoun,
That Ector, with ful many a bold baroun,
Caste on a day with Grekes for to fighte,
As he was wont to greve hem what he mighte.

6. Not I how longe or short it was bitwene
This purpos and that day they fighte mente;
But on a day wel armed, bright and shene,
Ector, and many a worthy wight out wente,
With spere in hond and bigge bowes bente;
And in the berd, with-oute lenger lette,
Hir fomen in the feld anoon hem mette.

7. The longe day, with speres sharpe y-grounde,
With arwes, dartes, swerdes, maces felle,
They fighte and bringen hors and man to grounde,
And with hir axes out the braynes quelle.
But in the laste shour, sooth for to telle,
The folk of Troye hem-selven so misledden,
That with the worse at night homward they fledden.

8. At whiche day was taken Antenor,
Maugre Polydamas or Monesteo,
Santippe, Sarpedon, Polynestor,
Polyte, or eek the Troian daun Ripheo,
And othere lasse folk, as Phebuseo.
So that, for harm, that day the folk of Troye
Dredden to lese a greet part of hir loye.

9. Of Pryamus was yeve, at Greek requeste,
A tyme of trewe, and tho they gonnen trete,
Hir prisoneres to chaungen, moste and leste,
And for the surplus yeven sommes grete.

This thing anoon was couth in every strete,
Bothe in thassege, in toune, and every-where,
And with the firste it cam to Calkas ere.

10. Whan Calkas knew this tretis sholde holde,
In consistorie, among the Grekes, sone
He gan in thringe forth, with lordes olde,
And sette him there-as he was wont to done;
And with a chaunged face hem bad a bone,
For love of god, to don that reverence,
To stinte noyse, and yeve him audience.

11. Thanne seyde he thus, 'lo! lordes myne, I was
Troian, as it is knowen out of drede;
And if that yow remembre, I am Calkas,
That alderfirst yaf comfort to your nede,
And tolde wel how that ye sholden spede.
For dredelees, thorugh yow, shal, in a stounde,
Ben Troye y-brend, and beten doun to grounde.

12. And in what forme, or in what maner wyse
This town to shende, and al your lust to acheve,
Ye han er this wel herd it me devyse;
This knowe ye, my lordes, as I leve.
And for the Grekes weren me so leve,
I com my-self in my propre persone,
To teche in this how yow was best to done;

13. Havinge un-to my tresour ne my rente
Right no resport, to respect of your ese.
Thus al my good I loste and to yow wente,
Wening in this you, lordes, for to plese.
But al that los ne doth me no disese.
I vouche-sauf, as wisly have I Ioye,
For you to lese al that I have in Troye,

14. Save of a doughter, that I lafte, allas!
Slepinge at hoom, whanne out of Troye I sterte.
O sterne, O cruel fader that I was!
How mighte I have in that so hard an herte?
Allas! I ne hadde y-brought hir in hir sherte!
For sorwe of which I wol not live to morwe,
But-if ye lordes rewe up-on my sorwe.

15. For, by that cause I say no tyme er now
Hir to delivere, I holden have my pees;
But now or never, if that it lyke yow,
I may hir have right sone, doutelees.
O help and grace! amonges al this prees,
Rewe on this olde caitif in destresse,
Sin I through yow have al this hevinesse!

16. Ye have now caught and fetered in prisoun
Troins y-nowe; and if your willes be,
My child with oon may have redempcioun.
Now for the love of god and of bountee,
Oon of so fele, allas! so yeve him me.
What nede were it this preyere for to werne,

Sin ye shul bothe han folk and toun as yerne?

17. On peril of my lyf, I shal not lye,
Appollo hath me told it feithfully;
I have eek founde it by astronomye,
By sort, and by augurie eek trewely,
And dar wel seye, the tyme is faste by,
That fyr and flaumbe on al the toun shal sprede;
And thus shal Troye turne in asshen dede.

18. For certeyn, Phebus and Neptunus bothe,
That makeden the walles of the toun,
Ben with the folk of Troye alwey so wrothe,
That thei wol bringe it to confusioun,
Right in despyt of king Lameadoun.
By-cause he nolde payen hem hir hyre,
The toun of Troye shal ben set on-fyre.'

19. Telling his tale alwey, this olde greye,
Humble in speche, and in his lokinge eke,
The salte teres from his eyën tweye
Ful faste ronnen doun by eyther cheke.
So longe he gan of socour hem byseke
That, for to hele him of his sorwes sore,
They yave him Antenor, with-oute more.

20. But who was glad y-nough but Calkas tho?
And of this thing ful sone his nedes leyde
On hem that sholden for the tretis go,
And hem for Antenor ful ofte preyde
To bringen hoom king Toas and Criseyde;
And whan Pryam his save-garde sente,
Thembassadours to Troye streyght they wente.

21. The cause y-told of hir cominge, the olde
Pryam the king ful sone in general
Let here-upon his parlement to holde,
Of which the effect rehersen yow I shal.
Thembassadours ben answered for fynal,
Theschaunge of prisoners and al this nede
Hem lyketh wel, and forth in they procede.

22. This Troilus was present in the place,
Whan axed was for Antenor Criseyde,
For which ful sone chaungen gan his face,
As he that with tho wordes wel neigh deyde.
But nathelees, he no word to it seyde,
Lest men sholde his affeccioun espye;
With mannes herte he gan his sorwes drye.

23. And ful of anguish and of grisly drede
Abood what lordes wolde un-to it seye;
And if they wolde graunte, as god forbede,
Theschaunge of hir, than thoughte he thinges tweye,
First, how to save hir honour, and what weye
He mighte best theschaunge of hir withstonde;
Ful faste he caste how al this mighte stonde.

24. Love him made al prest to doon hir byde,
And rather dye than she sholde go;
But resoun seyde him, on that other syde,

'With-oute assent of hir ne do not so,
Lest for thy werk she wolde be thy fo,
And seyn, that thorugh thy medling is y-blowe
Your bother love, there it was erst unknowe.'

25. For which he gan deliberen, for the beste,
That though the lordes wolde that she wente,
He wolde late hem graunte what hem leste,
And telle his lady first what that they mente.
And whan that she had seyd him hir entente,
Ther-after wolde he werken also blyve,
Though al the world ayein it wolde stryve.

26. Ector, which that wel the Grekes herde,
For Antenor how they wolde han Criseyde,
Gan it withstonde, and sobrely answerde:—
'Sires, she nis no prisoner,' he seyde;
'I noot on yow who that this charge leyde,
But, on my part, ye may eft-sone him telle,
We usen here no wommen for to selle.'

27. The noyse of peple up-stirte thanne at ones,
As breme as blase of straw y-set on fyre;
For infortune it wolde, for the nones,
They sholden hir confusioun desyre.
'Ector,' quod they, 'what goost may yow enspyre,
This womman thus to shilde and doon us lese
Daun Antenor?—a wrong wey now ye chese—

28. That is so wys, and eek so bold baroun,
And we han nede of folk, as men may see;
He is eek oon, the grettest of this toun;
O Ector, lat tho fantasyës be!
O king Pryam,' quod they, 'thus seggen we,
That al our voys is to for-gon Criseyde;'
And to deliveren Antenor they preyde.

29. O Iuvenal, lord! trewe is thy sentence,
That litel witen folk what is to yerne
That they ne finde in hir desyr offence;
For cloud of errour lat hem not descerne
What best is; and lo, here ensample as yerne.
This folk desiren now deliverance
Of Antenor, that broughte hem to mischaunce!

30. For he was after traytour to the toun
Of Troye; allas! they quitte him out to rathe;
O nyce world, lo thy discrecioun!
Criseyde, which that never dide hem skathe,
Shal now no lenger in hir blisse bathe;
But Antenor, he shal com hoom to toune,
And she shal out; thus seyden here and howne.

31. For which delibered was by parlement,
For Antenor to yelden up Criseyde,
And it pronounced by the president,
Al-theigh that Ector 'nay' ful ofte preyde.
And fynaly, what wight that it with-seyde,
It was for nought, it moste been, and sholde:

For substaunce of the parlement it wolde.

32. Departed out of parlement echone,
This Troilus, with-oute wordes mo,
Un-to his chaumbre spedde him faste allone,
But-if it were a man of his or two,
The whiche he bad out faste for to go,
By-cause he wolde slepen, as he seyde,
And hastely up-on his bed him leyde.

33. And as in winter leves been biraft,
Eche after other, til the tree be bare,
So that ther nis but bark and braunche y-laft,
Lyth Troilus, biraft of ech welfare,
Y-bounden in the blake bark of care,
Disposed wood out of his wit to breyde,
So sore him sat the chaunginge of Criseyde.

34. He rist him up, and every dore he shette
And windowe eek, and tho this sorweful man
Up-on his beddes syde a-doun him sette,
Ful lyk a deed image pale and wan;
And in his brest the heped wo bigan
Out-breste, and he to werken in this wyse
In his woodnesse, as I shal yow devyse.

35. Right as the wilde bole biginneth springe
Now here, now there, y-darted to the herte,
And of his deeth roreth in compleyninge,
Right so gan he aboute the chaumbre sterte,
Smyting his brest ay with his festes smerte;
His heed to the wal, his body to the grounde
Ful ofte he swapte, him-selven to confounde.

36. His eyen two, for pitee of his herte,
Out stremeden as swifte welles tweye;
The heighe sobbes of his sorwes smerte
His speche him rafte, unnethes mighte he seye,
'O deeth, allas! why niltow do me deye?
A-cursed be the day which that nature
Shoop me to ben a lyves creature!'

37. But after, whan the furie and the rage
Which that his herte twiste and faste threste,
By lengthe of tyme somwhat gan asswage,
Up-on his bed he leyde him doun to reste;
But tho bigonne his teres more out-breste,
That wonder is, the body may suffyse
To half this wo, which that I yow devyse.

38. Than seyde he thus, 'Fortune! allas the whyle!
What have I doon, what have I thus a-gilt?
How mightestow for reuthe me bigyle?
Is ther no grace, and shal I thus be spilt?
Shal thus Criseyde awey, for that thou wilt?
Allas! how maystow in thyn herte finde
To been to me thus cruel and unkinde?

39. Have I thee nought honoured al my lyve,

As thou wel wost, above the goddes alle?
Why wiltow me fro Ioye thus depryve?
O Troilus, what may men now thee calle
But wrecche of wrecches, out of honour falle
In-to miserie, in which I wol biwayle
Criseyde, allas! til that the breeth me fayle?

40. Allas, Fortune! if that my lyf in Ioye
Displesed hadde un-to thy foule envye,
Why ne haddestow my fader, king of Troye,
By-raft the lyf, or doon my bretheren dye,
Or slayn my-self, that thus compleyne and crye,
I, combre-world, that may of nothing serve,
But ever dye, and never fully sterve?

41. If that Criseyde allone were me laft,
Nought roughte I whider thou woldest me stere;
And hir, allas! than hastow me biraft.
But ever-more, lo! this is thy manere,
To reve a wight that most is to him dere,
To preve in that thy gerful violence.
Thus am I lost, ther helpeth no defence!

42. O verray lord of love, O god, allas!
That knowest best myn herte and al my thought,
What shal my sorwful lyf don in this cas
If I for-go that I so dere have bought?
Sin ye Cryseyde and me han fully brought
In-to your grace, and bothe our hertes seled,
How may ye suffre, allas! it be repeled?

43. What I may doon, I shal, whyl I may dure
On lyve in torment and in cruel peyne,
This infortune or this disaventure,
Allone as I was born, y-wis, compleyne;
Ne never wil I seen it shyne or reyne;
But ende I wil, as Edippe, in derknesse
My sorwful lyf, and dyen in distresse.

44. O wery goost, that errest to and fro,
Why niltow fleen out of the wofulleste
Body, that ever mighte on grounde go?
O soule, lurkinge in this wo, unneste,
Flee forth out of myn herte, and lat it breste,
And folwe alwey Criseyde, thy lady dere;
Thy righte place is now no lenger here!

45. O wofulle eyen two, sin your disport
Was al to seen Criseydes eyen brighte,
What shal ye doon but, for my discomfort,
Stonden for nought, and wepen out your sighte?
Sin she is queynt, that wont was yow to lighte,
In veyn fro-this-forth have I eyen tweye
Y-formed, sin your vertue is a-weye.

46. O my Criseyde, O lady sovereyne
Of thilke woful soule that thus cryeth,
Who shal now yeven comfort to my peyne?

Allas, no wight; but when myn herte dyeth,
My spirit, which that so un-to yow hyeth,
Receyve in gree, for that shal ay yow serve;
For-thy no fors is, though the body sterve.

47. O ye loveres, that heighe upon the wheel
Ben set of Fortune, in good aventure,
God leve that ye finde ay love of steel,
And longe mot your lyf in Ioye endure!
But whan ye comen by my sepulture,
Remembreth that your felawe resteth there;
For I lovede eek, though I unworthy were.

48. O olde unholsom and mislyved man,
Calkas I mene, allas! what eyleth thee
To been a Greek, sin thou art born Troian?
O Calkas, which that wilt my bane be,
In cursed tyme was thou born for me!
As wolde blisful Iove, for his Ioye,
That I thee hadde, where I wolde, in Troye!'

49. A thousand sykes, hottere than the glede,
Out of his brest ech after other wente,
Medled with pleyntes newe, his wo to fede,
For which his woful teres never stente;
And shortly, so his peynes him torente,
And wex so mat, that Ioye nor penaunce
He feleth noon, but lyth forth in a traunce.

50. Pandare, which that in the parlement
Hadde herd what every lord and burgeys seyde,
And how ful graunted was, by oon assent,
For Antenor to yelden so Criseyde,
Gan wel neigh wood out of his wit to breyde,
So that, for wo, he niste what he mente;
But in a rees to Troilus he wente.

51. A certeyn knight, that for the tyme kepte
The chaumbre-dore, un-dide it him anoon;
And Pandare, that ful tendreliche wepte,
In-to the derke chaumbre, as stille as stoon,
Toward the bed gan softely to goon,
So confus, that he niste what to seye;
For verray wo his wit was neigh aweye.

52. And with his chere and loking al to-torn,
For sorwe of this, and with his armes folden,
He stood this woful Troilus biforn,
And on his pitous face he gan biholden;
But lord, so often gan his herte colden,
Seing his freend in wo, whos hevinesse
His herte slow, as thoughte him, for distresse.

53. This woful wight, this Troilus, that felte
His freend Pandare y-comen him to see,
Gan as the snow ayein the sonne melte,
For which this sorwful Pandare, of pitee,
Gan for to wepe as tendreliche as he;
And specheles thus been thise ilke tweye,

That neyther mighte o word for sorwe seye.

54. But at the laste this woful Troilus,
Ney deed for smert, gan bresten out to rore,
And with a sorwful noyse he seyde thus,
Among his sobbes and his sykes sore,
'Lo! Pandare, I am deed, with-outen more.
Hastow nought herd at parlement,' he seyde,
'For Antenor how lost is my Criseyde?'

55. This Pandarus, ful deed and pale of hewe,
Ful pitously answerde and seyde, 'yis!
As wisly were it fals as it is trewe,
That I have herd, and wot al how it is.
O mercy, god, who wolde have trowed this?
Who wolde have wend that, in so litel a throwe,
Fortune our Ioye wolde han over-throwe?

56. For in this world ther is no creature,
As to my doom, that ever saw ruyne
Straungere than this, thorugh cas or aventure.
But who may al eschewe or al devyne?
Swich is this world; for-thy I thus defyne,
Ne trust no wight to finden in Fortune
Ay propretee; hir yeftes been comune.

57. But tel me this, why thou art now so mad
To sorwen thus? Why lystow in this wyse,
Sin thy desyr al holly hastow had,
So that, by right, it oughte y-now suffyse?
But I, that never felte in my servyse
A frendly chere or loking of an yë,
Lat me thus wepe and wayle, til I dye.

58. And over al this, as thou wel wost thy-selve,
This town is ful of ladies al aboute;
And, to my doom, fairer than swiche twelve
As ever she was, shal I finde, in som route,
Ye, oon or two, with-outen any doute.
For-thy be glad, myn owene dere brother,
If she be lost, we shul recovere another.

59. What, god for-bede alwey that ech plesaunce
In o thing were, and in non other wight!
If oon can singe, another can wel daunce;
If this be goodly, she is glad and light;
And this is fayr, and that can good a-right.
Ech for his vertu holden is for dere,
Bothe heroner and faucon for rivere.

60. And eek, as writ Zanzis, that was ful wys,
"The newe love out chaceth ofte the olde;"
And up-on newe cas lyth newe avys.
Thenk eek, thy-self to saven artow holde;
Swich fyr, by proces, shal of kinde colde.
For sin it is but casuel plesaunce,
Som cas shal putte it out of remembraunce.

61. For al-so seur as day cometh after night,
The newe love, labour or other wo,
Or elles selde seinge of a wight,
Don olde affeccioun alle over-go.
And, for thy part, thou shalt have oon of tho
To abrigge with thy bittre peynes smerte;

Absence of hir shal dryve hir out of herte.'

62. Thise wordes seyde he for the nones alle,
To helpe his freend, lest he for sorwe deyde.
For doutelees, to doon his wo to falle,
He roughte not what unthrift that he seyde.
But Troilus, that neigh for sorwe deyde,
Tok litel hede of al that ever he mente;
Oon ere it herde, at the other out it wente: —

63. But at the laste answerde and seyde, 'freend,
This lechecraft, or heled thus to be,
Were wel sitting, if that I were a feend,
To traysen hir that trewe is unto me!
I pray god, lat this consayl never y-thee;
But do me rather sterve anon-right here
Er I thus do as thou me woldest lere.

64. She that I serve, y-wis, what so thou seye,
To whom myn herte enhabit is by right,
Shal han me holly hires til that I deye.
For, Pandarus, sin I have trouthe hir hight,
I wol not been untrewe for no wight;
But as hir man I wol ay live and sterve,
And never other creature serve.

65. And ther thou seyst, thou shalt as faire finde
As she, lat be, make no comparisoun
To creature y-formed here by kinde.
O leve Pandare, in conclusioun,
I wol not be of thyn opinioun,
Touching al this; for whiche I thee biseche,
So hold thy pees; thou sleest me with thy speche.

66. Thow biddest me I sholde love an-other
Al freshly newe, and lat Criseyde go!
It lyth not in my power, leve brother.
And though I mighte, I wolde not do so.
But canstow pleyen raket, to and fro,
Netle in, dokke out, now this, now that, Pandare?
Now foule falle hir, for thy wo that care!

67. Thow farest eek by me, thou Pandarus,
As he, that whan a wight is wo bigoon,
He cometh to him a pas, and seyth right thus,
"Thenk not on smert, and thou shalt fele noon."
Thou most me first transmuwen in a stoon,
And reve me my passiounes alle,
Er thou so lightly do my wo to falle.

68. The deeth may wel out of my brest departe
The lyf, so longe may this sorwe myne;
But fro my soule shal Criseydes darte
Out never-mo; but doun with Proserpyne,
Whan I am deed, I wol go wone in pyne;
And ther I wol eternally compleyne
My woe, and how that twinned be we tweyne.

69. Thow hast here maad an argument, for fyn,
How that it sholde lasse peyne be
Criseyde to for-goon, for she was myn,
And live in ese and in felicitee.
Why gabbestow, that seydest thus to me
That "him is wors that is fro wele y-throwe,

Than he hadde erst non of that wele y-knowe?"

70. But tel me now, sin that thee thinketh so light
To chaungen so in love, ay to and fro,
Why hastow not don bisily thy might
To chaungen hir that doth thee al thy wo?
Why niltow lete hir fro thyn herte go?
Why niltow love an-other lady swete,
That may thyn herte setten in quiete?

71. If thou hast had in love ay yet mischaunce,
And canst it not out of thyn herte dryve,
I, that livede in lust and in plesaunce
With hir as muche as creature onlyve,
How sholde I that foryete, and that so blyve?
O where hastow ben hid so longe in muwe,
That canst so wel and formely arguwe?

72. Nay, nay, god wot, nought worth is al thy reed,
For which, for what that ever may bifalle,
With-outen wordes mo, I wol be deed.
O deeth, that endere art of sorwes alle,
Com now, sin I so ofte after thee calle,
For sely is that deeth, soth for to seyne,
That, ofte y-cleped, cometh and endeth peyne.

73. Wel wot I, whyl my lyf was in quiete,
Er thou me slowe, I wolde have yeven hyre;
But now thy cominge is to me so swete,
That in this world I no-thing so desyre.
O deeth, sin with this sorwe I am a-fyre,
Thou outher do me anoon in teres drenche,
Or with thy colde strook myn hete quenche!

74. Sin that thou sleest so fele in sondry wyse
Ayens hir wil, unpreyed, day and night,
Do me, at my requeste, this servyse,
Delivere now the world, so dostow right,
Of me, that am the wofulleste wight
That ever was; for tyme is that I sterve,
Sin in this world of right nought may I serve.'

75. This Troilus in teres gan distille,
As licour out of alambyk ful faste;
And Pandarus gan holde his tunge stille,
And to the ground his eyen doun he caste.
But nathelees, thus thoughte he at the laste,
'What, parde, rather than my felawe deye,
Yet shal I som-what more un-to him seye:'

76. And seyde, 'freend, sin thou hast swich distresse,
And sin thee list myn arguments to blame,
Why nilt thy-selven helpen doon redresse,
And with thy manhod letten al this grame?
Go ravisshe hir ne canstow not for shame!
And outher lat hir out of toune fare,
Or hold hir stille, and leve thy nyce fare.

77. Artow in Troye, and hast non hardiment
To take a womman which that loveth thee,

And wolde hir-selven been of thyn assent?
Now is not this a nyce vanitee?
Rys up anoon, and lat this weping be,
And kyth thou art a man, for in this houre
I wil be deed, or she shal bleven oure.'

78. To this answerde him Troilus ful softe,
And seyde, 'parde, leve brother dere,
Al this have I my-self yet thought ful ofte,
And more thing than thou devysest here.
But why this thing is laft, thou shalt wel here;
And whan thou me hast yeve an audience,
Ther-after mayst thou telle al thy sentence.

79. First, sin thou wost this toun hath al this werre
For ravisshing of wommen so by might,
It sholde not be suffred me to erre,
As it stant now, ne doon so gret unright.
I sholde han also blame of every wight,
My fadres graunt if that I so withstode,
Sin she is chaunged for the tounes goode.

80. I have eek thought, so it were hir assent,
To aske hir at my fader, of his grace;
Than thenke I, this were hir accusement,
Sin wel I woot I may hir not purchace.
For sin my fader, in so heigh a place
As parlement, hath hir eschaunge enseled,
He nil for me his lettre be repeled.

81. Yet drede I most hir herte to pertourbe
With violence, if I do swich a game;
For if I wolde it openly distourbe,
It moste been disclaundre to hir name.
And me were lever deed than hir defame,
As nolde god but-if I sholde have
Hir honour lever than my lyf to save!

82. Thus am I lost, for ought that I can see;
For certeyn is, sin that I am hir knight,
I moste hir honour levere han than me
In every cas, as lovere oughte of right.
Thus am I with desyr and reson twight;
Desyr for to distourben hir me redeth,
And reson nil not, so myn herte dredeth.'

83. Thus wepinge that he coude never cesse,
He seyde, 'allas! how shal I, wrecche, fare?
For wel fele I alwey my love encresse,
And hope is lasse and lasse alwey, Pandare!
Encressen eek the causes of my care;
So wel-a-wey, why nil myn herte breste?
For, as in love, ther is but litel reste.'

84. Pandare answerde, 'freend, thou mayst, for me,
Don as thee list; but hadde ich it so hote,
And thyn estat, she sholde go with me;
Though al this toun cryede on this thing by note,
I nolde sette at al that noyse a grote.
For when men han wel cryed, than wol they roune;
A wonder last but nyne night never in toune.

85. Devyne not in reson ay so depe
Ne curteysly, but help thy-self anoon; 590
Bet is that othere than thy-selven wepe,
And namely, sin ye two been al oon.
Rys up, for by myn heed, she shal not goon;
And rather be in blame a lyte y-founde
Than sterve here as a gnat, withoute wounde. 595

86. It is no shame un-to yow, ne no vyce
Hir to with-holden, that ye loveth most.
Paraunter, she mighte holden thee for nyce
To lete hir go thus to the Grekes ost.
Thenk eek Fortune, as wel thy-selven wost, 600
Helpeth hardy man to his empryse,
And weyveth wrecches, for hir cowardyse.

87. And though thy lady wolde a litel hir greve,
Thou shalt thy pees ful wel hereafter make,
But as for me, certayn, I can not leve 605
That she wolde it as now for yvel take.
Why sholde than for ferd thyn herte quake?
Thenk eek how Paris hath, that is thy brother,
A love; and why shaltow not have another?

88. And Troilus, o thing I dar thee swere, 610
That if Criseyde, whiche that is thy leef,
Now loveth thee as wel as thou dost here,
God helpe me so, she nil not take a-greef,
Though thou do bote a-noon in this mischeef.
And if she wilneth fro thee for to passe, 615
Thanne is she fals; so love hir wel the lasse.

89. For-thy tak herte, and thenk, right as a knight,
Thourgh love is broken alday every lawe.
Kyth now sumwhat thy corage and thy might,
Have mercy on thy-self, for any awe. 620
Lat not this wrecched wo thin herte gnawe,
But manly set the world on sixe and sevene;
And, if thou deye a martir, go to hevene.

90. I wol my-self be with thee at this dede,
Though ich and al my kin, up-on a stounde, 625
Shulle in a strete as dogges liggen dede,
Thourgh-girt with many a wyd and blody wounde.
In every cas I wol a freend be founde.
And if thee list here sterven as a wrecche,
A-dieu, the devel spede him that it recche!' 630

91. This Troilus gan with tho wordes quiken,
And seyde, 'freend, graunt mercy, ich assente;
But certaynly thou mayst not me so priken,
Ne peyne noon ne may me so tormente,
That, for no cas, it is not myn entente, 635
At shorte wordes, though I dyen sholde,
To ravisshe hir, but-if hir-self it wolde.'

92. 'Why, so mene I,' quod Pandarus, 'al this day.
But tel me than, hastow hir wel assayed,
That sorwest thus?' And he answerde, 'nay.' 640

'Wher-of artow,' quod Pandare, 'than a-mayed,
That nost not that she wol ben yvel apayed
To ravisshe hir, sin thou hast not ben there,
But-if that Iove tolde it in thyn ere?

93. For-thy rys up, as nought ne were, anoon,
And wash thy face, and to the king thou wende,
Or he may wondren whider thou art goon.
Thou most with wisdom him and othere blende;
Or, up-on cas, he may after thee sende
Er thou be war; and shortly, brother dere,
Be glad, and lat me werke in this matere.

94. For I shal shape it so, that sikerly
Thou shalt this night som tyme, in som manere,
Com speke with thy lady prevely,
And by hir wordes eek, and by hir chere,
Thou shalt ful sone aparceyve and wel here
Al hir entente, and in this cas the beste;
And fare now wel, for in this point I reste.'

95. The swifte Fame, whiche that false thinges
Egal reporteth lyk the thinges trewe,
Was thorugh-out Troye y-fled with preste winges
Fro man to man, and made this tale al newe,
How Calkas doughter, with hir brighte hewe,
At parlement, with-oute wordes more,
I-graunted was in chaunge of Antenore.

96. The whiche tale anoon-right as Criseyde
Had herd, she which that of hir fader roughte,
As in this cas, right nought, ne whanne he deyde,
Ful bisily to Iuppiter bisoughte
Yeve him mischaunce that this tretis broughte.
But shortly, lest thise tales sothe were,
She dorste at no wight asken it, for fere.

97. As she that hadde hir herte and al hir minde
On Troilus y-set so wonder faste,
That al this world ne mighte hir love unbinde,
Ne Troilus out of hir herte caste;
She wol ben his, whyl that hir lyf may laste.
And thus she brenneth bothe in love and drede,
So that she niste what was best to rede.

98. But as men seen in toune, and al aboute,
That wommen usen frendes to visyte,
So to Criseyde of wommen com a route
For pitous Ioye, and wenden hir delyte;
And with hir tales, dere y-nough a myte,
These wommen, whiche that in the cite dwelle,
They sette hem doun, and seyde as I shal telle.

99. Quod first that oon, 'I am glad, trewely,
By-cause of yow, that shal your fader see.'
A-nother seyde, 'y-wis, so nam not I;
For al to litel hath she with us be.'
Quod tho the thridde, 'I hope, y-wis, that she
Shal bringen us the pees on every syde,
That, whan she gooth, almighty god hir gyde!'

100. Tho wordes and tho wommannisshe thinges,
She herde hem right as though she thennes were;
For, god it wot, hir herte on other thing is,
Although the body sat among hem there.
Hir advertence is alwey elles-where;
For Troilus ful faste hir soule soughte;
With-outen word, alwey on him she thoughte.

101. Thise wommen, that thus wenden hir to plese,
Aboute nought gonne alle hir tales spende;
Swich vanitee ne can don hir non ese,
As she that, al this mene whyle, brende
Of other passioun than that they wende,
So that she felte almost hir herte deye
For wo, and wery of that compañye.

102. For which no lenger mighte she restreyne
Hir teres, so they gonnen up to welle,
That yeven signes of the bitter peyne
In whiche hir spirit was, and moste dwelle;
Remembring hir, fro heven unto which helle
She fallen was, sith she forgoth the sighte
Of Troilus, and sorowfully she sighte.

103. And thilke foles sittinge hir aboute
Wenden, that she wepte and syked sore
By-cause that she sholde out of that route
Departe, and never pleye with hem more.
And they that hadde y-knowen hir of yore
Seye hir so wepe, and thoughte it kindenesse,
And eche of hem wepte eek for hir distresse;

104. And bisily they gonnen hir conforten
Of thing, god wot, on which she litel thoughte;
And with hir tales wenden hir disporten,
And to be glad they often hir bisoughte.
But swich an ese ther-with they hir wroughte
Right as a man is esed for to fele,
For ache of heed, to clawen him on his hele!

105. But after al this nyce vanitee
They took hir leve, and hoom they wenten alle.
Criseyde, ful of sorweful pitee,
In-to hir chaumbre up wente out of the halle,
And on hir bed she gan for deed to falle,
In purpos never thennes for to ryse;
And thus she wroughte, as I shal yow devyse.

106. Hir ounded heer, that sonnish was of hewe,
She rente, and eek hir fingres longe and smale
She wrong ful ofte, and bad god on hir rewe,
And with the deeth to doon bote on hir bale.
Hir hewe, whylom bright, that tho was pale,
Bar witnes of hir wo and hir constreynte;
And thus she spak, sobbinge, in hir compleynte:

107. 'Alas!' quod she, 'out of this regioun
I, woful wrecche and infortuned wight,

And born in corsed constellacioun,
Mot goon, and thus departen fro my knight;
Wo worth, allas! that ilke dayes light
On which I saw him first with eyen tweyne,
That causeth me, and I him, al this peyne!'

108. Therwith the teres from hir eyen two
Doun fille, as shour in Aperill, ful swythe;
Hir whyte brest she bet, and for the wo
After the deeth she cryed a thousand sythe,
Sin he that wont hir wo was for to lythe,
She mot for-goon; for which disaventure
She held hir-self a forlost creature.

109. She seyde, 'how shal he doon, and I also?
How sholde I live, if that I from him twinne?
O dere herte eek, that I love so,
Who shal that sorwe sleen that ye ben inne?
O Calkas, fader, thyn be al this sinne!
O moder myn, that cleped were Argyve,
Wo worth that day that thou me bere on lyve!

110. To what fyn sholde I live and sorwen thus?
How sholde a fish with-oute water dure?
What is Criseyde worth, from Troilus?
How sholde a plaunte or lyves creature
Live, with-oute his kinde norriture?
For which ful oft a by-word here I seye,
That, "rotelees, mot grene sone deye."

111. I shal don thus, sin neither swerd ne darte
Dar I non handle, for the crueltee,
That ilke day that I from yow departe,
If sorwe of that nil not my bane be,
Than shal no mete or drinke come in me
Til I my soule out of my breste unshethe;
And thus my-selven wol I do to dethe.

112. And, Troilus, my clothes everichoon
Shul blake been, in tokeninge, herte swete,
That I am as out of this world agoon,
That wont was yow to setten in quiete;
And of myn ordre, ay til deeth me mete,
The observaunce ever, in your absence,
Shal sorwe been, compleynte, and abstinence.

113. Myn herte and eek the woful goost ther-inne
Biquethe I, with your spirit to compleyne
Eternally, for they shul never twinne.
For though in erthe y-twinned be we tweyne,
Yet in the feld of pitee, out of peyne,
That hight Elysos, shul we been y-fere,
As Orpheus and Erudice his fere.

114. Thus herte myn, for Antenor, allas!
I sone shal be chaunged, as I wene.
But how shul ye don in this sorwful cas,
How shal your tendre herte this sustene?
But herte myn, for-yet this sorwe and tene,
And me also; for, soothly for to seye,

So ye wel fare, I recche not to deye.'

115. How mighte it ever y-red ben or y-songe,
The pleynte that she made in hir distresse? 800
I noot; but, as for me, my litel tonge,
If I discreven wolde hir hevinesse,
It sholde make hir sorwe seme lesse
Than that it was, and childishly deface
Hir heigh compleynte, and therfore I it pace. 805

116. Pandare, which that sent from Troilus
Was to Criseyde, as ye han herd devyse,
That for the beste it was accorded thus,
And he ful glad to doon him that servyse,
Un-to Criseyde, in a ful secree wyse, 810
Ther-as she lay in torment and in rage,
Com hir to telle al hoolly his message.

117. And fond that she hir-selven gan to trete
Ful pitously; for with hir salte teres
Hir brest, hir face y-bathed was ful wete; 815
The mighty tresses of hir sonnish heres,
Unbroyden, hangen al aboute hir eres;
Which yaf him verray signal of martyre
Of deeth, which that hir herte gan desyre.

118. Whan she him saw, she gan for sorwe anoon 820
Hir tery face a-twixe hir armes hyde,
For which this Pandare is so wo bi-goon,
That in the hous he mighte unnethe abyde,
As he that pitee felte on every syde.
For if Criseyde hadde erst compleyned sore, 825
Tho gan she pleyne a thousand tymes more.

119. And in hir aspre pleynte than she seyde,
'Pandare first of Ioyes mo than two
Was cause causinge un-to me, Criseyde,
That now transmuwed been in cruel wo. 830
Wher shal I seye to yow "wel come" or no,
That alderfirst me broughte in-to servyse
Of love, allas! that endeth in swich wyse?

120. Endeth than love in wo? Ye, or men lyeth!
And alle worldly blisse, as thinketh me, 835
The ende of blisse ay sorwe it occupyeth;
And who-so troweth not that it so be,
Lat him upon me, woful wrecche, y-see,
That my-self hate, and ay my birthe acorse,
Felinge alwey, fro wikke I go to worse. 840

121. Who-so me seeth, he seeth sorwe al at ones,
Peyne, torment, pleynte, wo, distresse.
Out of my woful body harm ther noon is,
As anguish, langour, cruel bitternesse,
A-noy, smert, drede, fury, and eek siknesse. 845
I trowe, y-wis, from hevene teres reyne,
For pitee of myn aspre and cruel peyne!'

122. 'And thou, my suster, ful of discomfort,'
Quod Pandarus, 'what thenkestow to do?
Why ne hastow to thy-selven som resport,
Why woltow thus thy-selve, allas, for-do?
Leef al this werk and tak now hede to
That I shal seyn, and herkne, of good entente,
This, which by me thy Troilus thee sente.'

123. Torned hir tho Criseyde, a wo makinge
So greet that it a deeth was for to see: —
'Allas!' quod she, 'what wordes may ye bringe?
What wol my dere herte seyn to me,
Which that I drede never-mo to see?
Wol he have pleynte or teres, er I wende?
I have y-nowe, if he ther-after sende!'

124. She was right swich to seen in hir visage
As is that wight that men on bere binde;
Hir face, lyk of Paradys the image,
Was al y-chaunged in another kinde.
The pleye, the laughtre men was wont to finde
In hir, and eek hir Ioyes everychone,
Ben fled, and thus lyth now Criseyde allone.

125. Aboute hir eyen two a purpre ring
Bi-trent, in sothfast tokninge of hir peyne,
That to biholde it was a dedly thing,
For which Pandare mighte not restreyne
The teres from his eyen for to reyne.
But nathelees, as he best mighte, he seyde
From Troilus thise wordes to Criseyde.

126. 'Lo, nece, I trowe ye han herd al how
The king, with othere lordes, for the beste,
Hath mad eschaunge of Antenor and yow,
That cause is of this sorwe and this unreste.
But how this cas doth Troilus moleste,
That may non erthely mannes tonge seye;
For verray wo his wit is al aweye.

127. For which we han so sorwed, he and I,
That in-to litel bothe it hadde us slawe;
But thurgh my conseil this day, fynally,
He somwhat is fro weping now with-drawe.
And semeth me that he desyreth fawe
With yow to been al night, for to devyse
Remede in this, if ther were any wyse.

128. This, short and pleyne, theffect of my message,
As ferforth as my wit can comprehende.
For ye, that been of torment in swich rage,
May to no long prologe as now entende;
And her-upon ye may answere him sende.
And, for the love of god, my nece dere,
So leef this wo er Troilus be here.'

129. 'Gret is my wo,' quod she, and sighte sore,
As she that feleth dedly sharp distresse;
'But yet to me his sorwe is muchel more,

That love him bet than he him-self,
I gesse.
Allas! for me hath he swich hevinesse?
Can he for me so pitously compleyne?
Y-wis, this sorwe doubleth al my peyne.

130. Grevous to me, god wot, is for to twinne,'
Quod she, 'but yet it hardere is to me
To seen that sorwe which that he is inne;
For wel wot I, it wol my bane be;
And deye I wol in certayn,' tho quod she;
'But bidde him come, er deeth, that thus me threteth,
Dryve out that goost, which in myn herte beteth.'

131. Thise wordes seyd, she on hir armes two
Fil gruf, and gan to wepe pitously.
Quod Pandarus, 'allas! why do ye so,
Syn wel ye wot the tyme is faste by,
That he shal come? Arys up hastely,
That he yow nat biwopen thus ne finde,
But ye wol han him wood out of his minde!

132. For wiste he that ye ferde in this manere,
He wolde him-selve slee; and if I wende
To han this fare, he sholde not come here
For al the good that Pryam may despende.
For to what fyn he wolde anoon pretende,
That knowe I wel; and for-thy yet I seye,
So leef this sorwe, or platly he wol deye.

133. And shapeth yow his sorwe for to abregge,
And nought encresse, leve nece swete;
Beth rather to him cause of flat than egge,
And with som wysdom ye his sorwes bete.
What helpeth it to wepen ful a strete,
Or though ye bothe in salte teres dreynte?
Bet is a tyme of cure ay than of pleynte.

134. I mene thus; whan I him hider bringe,
Sin ye ben wyse, and bothe of oon assent,
So shapeth how distourbe your goinge,
Or come ayen, sone after ye be went.
Wommen ben wyse in short avysement;
And lat sen how your wit shal now avayle;
And what that I may helpe, it shal not fayle.'

135. 'Go,' quod Criseyde, 'and uncle, trewely,
I shal don al my might, me to restreyne
From weping in his sight, and bisily,
Him for to glade, I shal don al my peyne,
And in myn herte seken every veyne;
If to this soor ther may be founden salve,
It shal not lakken, certain, on myn halve.'

136. Goth Pandarus, and Troilus he soughte,
Til in a temple he fond him allone,
As he that of his lyf no lenger roughte;
But to the pitouse goddes everichone
Ful tendrely he preyde, and made his mone,

To doon him sone out of this world to pace;
For wel he thoughte ther was non other grace.

137. And shortly, al the sothe for to seye,
He was so fallen in despeyr that day,
That outrely he shoop him for to deye.
For right thus was his argument alwey:
He seyde, he nas but loren, waylawey!
'For al that comth, comth by necessitee;
Thus to be lorn, it is my destinee.

138. For certaynly, this wot I wel,' he seyde,
'That for-sight of divyne purveyaunce
Hath seyn alwey me to for-gon Criseyde,
Sin god seeth every thing, out of doutaunce,
And hem desponeth, thourgh his ordenaunce,
In hir merytes sothly for to be,
As they shul comen by predestinee.

139. But nathelees, allas! whom shal I leve?
For ther ben grete clerkes many oon,
That destinee thorugh argumentes preve;
And som men seyn that nedely ther is noon;
But that free chois is yeven us everichoon.
O, welaway! so sleye arn clerkes olde,
That I not whos opinion I may holde.

140. For som men seyn, if god seth al biforn,
Ne god may not deceyved ben, pardee,
Than moot it fallen, though men hadde it sworn,
That purveyaunce hath seyn bifore to be.
Wherfor I seye, that from eterne if he
Hath wist biforn our thought eek as our dede,
We have no free chois, as these clerkes rede.

141. For other thought nor other dede also
Might never be, but swich as purveyaunce,
Which may not ben deceyved never-mo,
Hath feled biforn, with-outen ignoraunce.
For if ther mighte been a variaunce
To wrythen out fro goddes purveyinge,
Ther nere no prescience of thing cominge;

142. But it were rather an opinioun
Uncerteyn, and no stedfast forseinge;
And certes, that were an abusioun,
That god shuld han no parfit cleer witinge
More than we men that han doutous weninge.
But swich an errour up-on god to gesse
Were fals and foul, and wikked corsednesse.

143. Eek this is an opinioun of somme
That han hir top ful heighe and smothe y-shore;
They seyn right thus, that thing is not to come
For that the prescience hath seyn bifore
That it shal come; but they seyn, that therfore
That it shal come, therfore the purveyaunce
Wot it biforn with-outen ignoraunce;

144. And in this manere this necessitee
Retorneth in his part contrarie agayn.

For needfully bihoveth it not to be
That thilke thinges fallen in certayn
That ben purveyed; but nedely, as they seyn,
Bihoveth it that thinges, whiche that falle,
That they in certayn ben purveyed alle.

145. I mene as though I laboured me in this,
To enqueren which thing cause of which thing be;
As whether that the prescience of god is
The certayn cause of the necessitee
Of thinges that to comen been, pardee;
Or if necessitee of thing cominge
Be cause certeyn of the purveyinge.

146. But now ne enforce I me nat in shewinge
How the ordre of causes stant; but wel wot I;
That it bihoveth that the bifallinge
Of thinges wist biforen certeynly
Be necessarie, al seme it not therby
That prescience put falling necessaire
To thing to come, al falle it foule or faire.

147. For if ther sit a man yond on a see,
Than by necessitee bihoveth it
That, certes, thyn opinioun soth be,
That wenest or coniectest that he sit;
And ferther-over now ayenward yit,
Lo, right so it is of the part contrarie,
As thus; (now herkne, for I wol not tarie):

148. I seye, that if the opinioun of thee
Be sooth, for that he sit, than seye I this,
That he mot sitten by necessitee;
And thus necessitee in either is.
For in him nede of sitting is, y-wis,
And in thee nede of sooth; and thus, forsothe,
Ther moot necessitee ben in yow bothe.

149. But thou mayst seyn, the man sit not therfore,
That thyn opinion of sitting soth is;
But rather, for the man sit ther bifore,
Therfore is thyn opinion sooth, y-wis.
And I seye, though the cause of sooth of this
Comth of his sitting, yet necessitee
Is entrechaunged, bothe in him and thee.

150. Thus on this same wyse, out of doutaunce,
I may wel maken, as it semeth me,
My resoninge of goddes purveyaunce,
And of the thinges that to comen be;
By whiche reson men may wel y-see,
That thilke thinges that in erthe falle,
That by necessitee they comen alle.

151. For al-though that, for thing shal come, y-wis,
Therfore is it purveyed, certaynly,
Nat that it comth for it purveyed is:
Yet nathelees, bihoveth it nedfully,
That thing to come be purveyed, trewely;
Or elles, thinges that purveyed be,
That they bityden by necessitee.

152. And this suffyseth right y-now, certeyn,

For to destroye our free chois every del.—
But now is this abusion to seyn,
That fallinge of the thinges temporel
Is cause of goddes prescience eternel.
Now trewely, that is a fals sentence,
That thing to come sholde cause his prescience.

153. What mighte I wene, and I hadde swich a thought,
But that god purveyth thing that is to come
For that it is to come, and elles nought?
So mighte I wene that thinges alle and some,
That whylom been bifalle and over come,
Ben cause of thilke sovereyn purveyaunce,
That for-wot al with-outen ignoraunce.

154. And over al this, yet seye I more herto,
That right as whan I woot ther is a thing,
Y-wis, that thing mot nedefully be so;
Eek right so, whan I woot a thing coming,
So mot it come; and thus the bitalling
Of thinges that ben wist bifore the tyde,
They mowe not been eschewed on no syde.'

155. Than seyde he thus, 'almighty love in trone,
That wost of al this thing the soothfastnesse,
Rewe on my sorwe, or do me deye sone,
Or bring Criseyde and me fro this distresse.'
And whyl he was in al this hevinesse,
Disputinge with him-self in this matere,
Com Pandare in, and seyde as ye may here.

156. 'O mighty god,' quod Pandarus, 'in trone,
Ey! who seigh ever a wys man faren so?
Why, Troilus, what thenkestow to done?
Hastow swich lust to been thyn owene fo?
What, parde, yet is not Criseyde a-go!
Why lust thee so thy-self for-doon for drede,
That in thyn heed thyn eyen semen dede?

157. Hastow not lived many a yeer biforn
With-outen hir, and ferd ful wel at ese?
Artow for hir and for non other born?
Hath kinde thee wroughte al-only hir to plese?
Lat be, and thenk right thus in thy disese,
That, in the dees right as ther fallen chaunces,
Right so in love, ther come and goon plesaunces.

158. And yet this is a wonder most of alle,
Why thou thus sorwest, sin thou nost not yit,
Touching hir goinge, how that it shal falle
Ne if she can hir-self disturben it.
Thou hast not yet assayed al hir wit
A man may al by tyme his nekke bede
Whan it shal of, and sorwen at the nede.

159. For-thy take hede of that that I shal seye;
I have with hir y-spoke and longe y-be,

So as accorded was bitwixe us tweye.
And ever-mo me thinketh thus, that she
Hath som-what in hir hertes prevetee,
Wher-with she can, if I shal right arede,
Distorbe al this, of which thou art in drede.

160. For which my counseil is, whan it is night,
Thou to hir go, and make of this an ende;
And blisful Iuno, thourgh hir grete mighte,
Shal, as I hope, hir grace un-to us sende.
Myn herte seyth, "certeyn, she shal not wende;"
And for-thy put thyn herte a whyle in rest;
And hold this purpos, for it is the beste.'

161. This Troilus answerde, and sighte sore,
'Thou seyst right wel, and I wil do right so;'
And what him liste, he seyde un-to it more.
And whan that it was tyme for to go,
Ful prevely him-self, with-outen mo,
Un-to hir com, as he was wont to done;
And how they wroughte, I shal yow telle sone.

162. Soth is, that whan they gonne first to mete,
So gan the peyne hir hertes for to twiste,
That neither of hem other mighte grete,
But hem in armes toke and after kiste.
The lasse wofulle of hem bothe niste
Wher that he was, ne mighte o word out-bringe,

As I seyde erst, for wo and for sobbinge.

163. Tho woful teres that they leten falle
As bittre weren, out of teres kinde,
For peyne, as is ligne aloës or galle.
So bittre teres weep nought, as I finde,
The woful Myrra through the bark and rinde.
That in this world ther nis so hard an herte,
That nolde han rewed on hir peynes smerte.

164. But whan hir woful wery gostes tweyne
Retorned been ther-as hem oughte dwelle,
And that som-what to wayken gan the peyne
By lengthe of pleynte, and ebben gan the welle
Of hire teres, and the herte unswelle,
With broken voys, al hoors forshright, Criseyde
To Troilus thise ilke wordes seyde:

165. 'O Iove, I deye, and mercy I beseche!
Help, Troilus!' and ther-with-al hir face
Upon his brest she leyde, and loste speche;
Hir wofal spirit from his propre place,
Right with the word, alwey up poynt to pace.
And thus she lyth with hewes pale and grene,
That whylom fresh and fairest was to sene.

166. This Troilus, that on hir gan biholde,
Clepinge hir name, (and she lay as for deed,
With-oute answere, and felte hir limes colde,
Hir eyen throwen upward to hir heed),

This sorwful man can now noon other reed,
But ofte tyme hir colde mouth he kiste;
Wher him was wo, god and himself it wiste!

167. He rist him up, and long streight he hir leyde;
For signe of lyf, for ought he can or may,
Can he noon finde in no-thing on Criseyde,
For which his song ful ofte is 'weylaway!'
But whan he saugh that specheles she lay,
With sorwful voys, and herte of blisse al bare,
He seyde how she was fro this world y-fare!

168. So after that he longe hadde hir compleyned,
His hondes wrong, and seyde that was to seye,
And with his teres salte hir brest bireyned,
He gan tho teris wypen of ful dreye,
And pitously gan for the soule preye,
And seyde, 'O lord, that set art in thy trone,
Rewe eek on me, for I shal folwe hir sone!'

169. She cold was and with-outen sentement,
For aught he woot, for breeth ne felte he noon;
And this was him a preignant argument
That she was forth out of this world agoon;
And whan he seigh ther was non other woon,
He gan hir limes dresse in swich manere
As men don hem that shul be leyd on bere.

170. And after this, with sterne and cruel herte,
His swerd a-noon out of his shethe he twighte,
Him-self to sleen, how sore that him smerte,
So that his sowle hir sowle folwen mighte,
Ther-as the doom of Mynos wolde it dighte;
Sin love and cruel Fortune it ne wolde,
That in this world he lenger liven sholde.

171. Thanne seyde he thus, fulfild of heigh desdayn,
'O cruel Iove, and thou, Fortune adverse,
This al and som, that falsly have ye slayn
Criseyde, and sin ye may do me no werse,
Fy on your might and werkes so diverse!
Thus cowardly ye shul me never winne;
Ther shal no deeth me fro my lady twinne.

172. For I this world, sin ye han slayn hir thus,
Wol lete, and folowe hir spirit lowe or hye;
Shal never lover seyn that Troilus
Dar not, for fere, with his lady dye;
For certeyn, I wol bere hir companye.
But sin ye wol not suffre us liven here,
Yet suffreth that our soules ben y-fere.

173. And thou, citee, whiche that I leve in wo,
And thou, Pryam, and bretheren al y-fere,
And thou, my moder, farewel! for I go;
And Attropos, make redy thou my bere!
And thou, Criseyde, o swete herte dere,
Receyve now my spirit!' wolde he seye,

With swerd at herte, al redy for to deye.

174. But as god wolde, of swough ther-with she abreyde,
And gan to syke, and 'Troilus' she cryde;
And he answerde, 'lady myn Criseyde,
Live ye yet?' and leet his swerd doun glyde.
'Ye, herte myn, that thanked be Cupyde!'
Quod she, and ther-with-al she sore sighte;
And he bigan to glade hir as he mighte;

175. Took hir in armes two, and kiste hir ofte,
And hir to glade he dide al his entente;
For which hir goost, that flickered ay on-lofte,
In-to hir woful herte ayein it wente.
But at the laste, as that hir eyen glente
A-syde, anoon she gan his swerd aspye,
As it lay bare, and gan for fere crye,

176. And asked him, why he it hadde out-drawe?
And Troilus anoon the cause hir tolde,
And how himself ther-with he wolde have slawe.
For which Criseyde up-on him gan biholde,
And gan him in hir armes faste folde,
And seyde, 'O mercy, god, lo, which a dede!
Allas! how neigh we were bothe dede!

177. Thanne if I ne hadde spoken, as grace was,
Ye wolde han slayn your-self anoon?' quod she.
'Ye, douteless;' and she answerde, 'allas!
For, by that ilke lord that made me,
I nolde a forlong wey on-lyve han be,
After your deeth, to han be crowned quene
Of al the lond the sonne on shyneth shene.

178. But with this selve swerd, which that here is,
My-selve I wolde have slayn!' — quod she tho;
'But ho, for we han right y-now of this,
And late us ryse and streight to bedde go,
And therë lat vs speken of our wo.
For, by the morter which that I see brenne,
Knowe I ful wel that day is not fer henne.'

179. Whan they were in hir bedde, in armes folde,
Nought was it lyk tho nightes here-biforn;
For pitously ech other gan biholde,
As they that hadden al hir blisse y-lorn,
Biwaylinge ay the day that they were born.
Til at the last this sorwful wight Criseyde
To Troilus these ilke wordes seyde: —

180. 'Lo, herte myn, wel wot ye this,' quod she,
'That if a wight alwey his wo compleyne,
And seketh nought how holpen for to be,
It nis but folye and encrees of peyne;
And sin that here assembled be we tweyne
To finde bote of wo that we ben inne,
It were al tyme sone to biginne.

181. I am a womman, as ful wel ye woot,

And as I am avysed sodeynly,
So wol I telle yow, whyl it is hoot.
Me thinketh thus, that neither ye nor I
Oughte half this wo to make skilfully.
For there is art y-now for to redresse
That yet is mis, and sleen this hevinesse.

182. Sooth is, the wo, the whiche that we ben inne,
For ought I woot, for no-thing elles is
But for the cause that we sholden twinne.
Considered al, ther nis no-more amis.
But what is thanne a remede un-to this,
But that we shape us sone for to mete?
This al and som, my dere herte swete.

183. Now that I shal wel bringen it aboute
To come ayein, sone after that I go,
Ther-of am I no maner thing in doute.
For dredeles, with-inne a wouke or two,
I shal ben here; and, that it may be so
By alle right, and in a wordes fewe,
I shal yow wel an heep of weyes shewe.

184. For which I wol not make long sermoun,
For tyme y-lost may not recovered be;
But I wol gon to my conclusioun,
And to the beste, in ought that I can see.
And, for the love of god, for-yeve it me
If I speke ought ayein your hertes reste;
For trewely, I speke it for the beste;

185. Makinge alwey a protestacioun,
That now these wordes, whiche that I shal seye,
Nis but to shewe yow my mocioun,
To finde un-to our helpe the beste weye;
And taketh it non other wyse, I preye.
For in effect what-so ye me comaunde,
That wol I doon, for that is no demaunde.

186. Now herkeneth this, ye han wel understonde
My goinge graunted is by parlement
So ferforth, that it may not be with-stonde
For al this world, as by my Iugement.
And sin ther helpeth noon avysement
To letten it, lat it passe out of minde;
And lat us shape a bettre wey to finde.

187. The sothe is, that the twinninge of us tweyne
Wol us disese and cruelliche anoye.
But him bihoveth som-tyme han a peyne,
That serveth love, if that he wol have Ioye.
And sin I shal no ferthere out of Troye
Than I may ryde ayein on half a morwe,
It oughte lasse causen us to sorwe.

188. So as I shal not so ben hid in muwe,
That day by day, myn owene herte dere,
Sin wel ye woot that it is now a truwe,
Ye shul ful wel al myn estat y-here.
And er that truwe is doon, I shal ben here,
And thanne have ye bothe Antenor y-wonne

And me also; beth glad now, if ye conne;

189. And thenk right thus, "Criseyde is now agoon,
But what! she shal come hastely ayeyn;"
And whanne, allas? by god, lo, right anoon,
Er dayes ten, this dar I saufly seyn.
And thanne at erste shul we been so fayn,
So as we shulle to-gederes ever dwelle,
That al this world ne mighte our blisse telle.

190. I see that ofte, ther-as we ben now,
That for the beste, our conseil for to hyde,
Ye speke not with me, nor I with yow
In fourtenight; ne see yow go ne ryde.
May ye not ten dayes thanne abyde,
For myn honour, in swich an aventure?
Y-wis, ye mowen elles lite endure!

191. Ye knowe eek how that al my kin is here,
But-if that onliche it my fader be;
And eek myn othere thinges alle y-fere,
And nameliche, my dere herte, ye,
Whom that I nolde leven for to see
For al this world, as wyd as it hath space;
Or elles, see ich never Ioves face!

192. Why trowe ye my fader in this wyse
Coveiteth so to see me, but for drede
Lest in this toun that folkes me dispyse
By-cause of him, for his unhappy dede?
What woot my fader what lyf that I lede?
For if he wiste in Troye how wel I fare,
Us neded for my wending nought to care.

193. Ye seen that every day eek, more and more,
Men trete of pees; and it supposed is,
That men the quene Eleyne shal restore,
And Grekes us restore that is mis.
So though ther nere comfort noon but this,
That men purposen pees on every syde,
Ye may the bettre at ese of herte abyde.

194. For if that it be pees, myn herte dere,
The nature of the pees mot nedes dryve
That men moste entrecomunen y-fere,
And to and fro eek ryde and gon as blyve
Alday as thikke as been flen from an hyve;
And every wight han libertee to bleve
Wher-as him list the bet, without-outen leve.

195. And though so be that pees ther may be noon,
Yet hider, though ther never pees ne were,
I moste come; for whider sholde I goon,
Or how mischaunce sholde I dwelle there
Among tho men of armes ever in fere?
For which, as wisly god my soule rede,
I can not seen wher-of ye sholden drede.

196. Have here another wey, if it so be
That al this thing ne may yow not suffyse.
My fader, as ye knowen wel, pardee,

Is old, and elde is ful of coveityse.
And I right now have founden al the gyse,
With-oute net, wher-with I shal him hente;
And herkeneth how, if that ye wole assente.

197. Lo, Troilus, men seyn that hard it is
The wolf ful, and the wether hool to have;
This is to seyn, that men ful ofte, y-wis,
Mot spenden part, the remenaunt for to save.
For ay with gold men may the herte grave
Of him that set is up-on coveityse;
And how I mene, I shal it yow devyse.

198. The moeble which that I have in this toun
Un-to my fader shal I take, and seye,
That right for trust and for savacioun
It sent is from a freend of his or tweye,
The whiche freendes ferventliche him preye
To senden after more, and that in hye,
Whyl that this toun stant thus in Iupartye.

199. And that shal been an huge quantitee,
Thus shal I seyn, but, lest it folk aspyde,
This may be sent by no wight but by me;
I shal eek shewen him, if pees bityde,
What frendes that ich have on every syde
Toward the court, to doon the wrathe pace
Of Priamus, and doon him stonde in grace.

200. So, what for o thing and for other, swete,
I shal him so enchaunten with my sawes,
That right in hevene his sowle is, shal he mete!
For al Appollo, or his clerkes lawes,
Or calculinge avayleth nought three hawes;
Desyr of gold shal so his sowle blende,
That, as me lyst, I shal wel make an ende.

201. And if he wolde ought by his sort it preve
If that I lye, in certayn I shal fonde
Distorben him, and plukke him by the sleve,
Makinge his sort, and beren him on honde,
He hath not wel the goddes understonde.
For goddes speken in amphibologyes,
And, for a sooth, they tellen twenty lyes.

202. Eek drede fond first goddes, I suppose,
Thus shal I seyn, and that his cowarde herte
Made him amis the goddes text to glose,
Whan he for ferde out of his Delphos sterte.
And but I make him sone to converte,
And doon my reed with-inne a day or tweye,
I wol to yow oblige me to deye.'

203. And treweliche, as writen wel I finde,
That al this thing was seyd of good entente;
And that hir herte trewe was and kinde
Towardes him, and spak right as she mente,
And that she starf for wo neigh, whan she wente,
And was in purpos ever to be trewe;

Thus writen they that of hir werkes knewe.

204. This Troilus, with herte and eres spradde,
Herde al this thing devysen to and fro;
And verraylich him semed that he hadde
The selve wit; but yet to lete hir go
His herte misforyaf him ever-mo.
But fynally, he gan his herte wreste
To trusten hir, and took it for the beste.

205. For which the grete furie of his penaunce
Was queynt with hope, and ther-with hem bitwene
Bigan for Ioye the amorouse daunce.
And as the briddes, whan the sonne is shene,
Delyten in hir song in leves grene,
Right so the wordes that they spake y-fere
Delyted hem, and made hir hertes clere.

206. But natheles, the wending of Criseyde,
For al this world, may nought out of his minde;
For which ful ofte he pitously hir preyde,
That of hir heste he might hir trewe finde.
And seyde hir, 'certes, if ye be unkinde,
And but ye come at day set in-to Troye,
Ne shal I never have hele, honour, ne Ioye.

207. For al-so sooth as sonne up-rist on morwe,
And, god! so wisly thou me, woful wrecche,
To reste bringe out of this cruel sorwe,
I wol my-selven slee if that ye drecche.
But of my deeth though litel be to recche,
Yet, er that ye me cause so to smerte,
Dwel rather here, myn owene swete herte!

208. For trewely, myn owene lady dere,
Tho sleightes yet that I have herd yow stere
Ful shaply been to failen alle y-fere.
For thus men seyn, "that oon thenketh the bere,
But al another thenketh his ledere."
Your sire is wys, and seyd is, out of drede,
"Men may the wyse at-renne, and not at-rede."

209. It is ful hard to halten unespyed
Bifore a crepul, for he can the craft;
Your fader is in sleighte as Argus yëd;
For al be that his moeble is him biraft,
His olde sleighte is yet so with him laft,
Ye shal not blende him for your womanhede,
Ne feyne a-right, and that is al my drede.

210. I noot if pees shal ever-mo bityde;
But, pees or no, for ernest ne for game,
I woot, sin Calkas on the Grekes syde
Hath ones been, and lost so foule his name,
He dar no more come here ayein for shame;
For which that weye, for ought I can espye,
To trusten on, nis but a fantasye,

211. Ye shal eek seen, your fader shal yow glose
To been a wyf, and as he can wel preche,

He shal som Grek so preyse and wel alose,
That ravisshen he shal yow with his speche,
Or do yow doon by force as he shal teche.
And Troilus, of whom ye nil han routhe,
Shal causeles so sterven in his trouthe!

212. And over al this, your fader shal despyse
Us alle, and seyn this citee nis but lorn;
And that thassege never shal aryse,
For-why the Grekes han it alle sworn
Til we be slayn, and doun our walles torn.
And thus he shal you with his wordes fere,
That ay drede I, that ye wol bleve there.

213. Ye shul eek seen so many a lusty knight
A-mong the Grekes, ful of worthinesse,
And eche of hem with herte, wit, and might
To plesen yow don al his besinesse,
That ye shul dullen of the rudenesse
Of us sely Troianes, but-if routhe
Remorde yow, or vertue of your trouthe.

214. And this to me so grevous is to thinke,
That fro my brest it wol my soule rende;
Ne dredeles, in me ther may not sinke
A good opinioun, if that ye wende;
For-why your faderes sleighte wol us shende.
And if ye goon, as I have told yow yore,
So thenk I nam but deed, withoute more.

215. For which, with humble, trewe, and pitous herte,
A thousand tymes mercy I yow preye;
So reweth on myn aspre peynes smerte,
And doth somwhat, as that I shal yow seye,
And lat us stele away bitwixe us tweye;
And thenk that folye is, whan man may chese,
For accident his substaunce ay to lese.

216. I mene this, that sin we mowe er day
Wel stele away, and been to-gider so,
What wit were it to putten in assay,
In cas ye sholden to your fader go,
If that ye mighte come ayein or no?
Thus mene I, that it were a gret folye
To putte that sikernesse in Iupartye.

217. And vulgarly to speken of substaunce
Of tresour, may we bothe with us lede
Y-nough to live in honour and plesaunce,
Til in-to tyme that we shul ben dede;
And thus we may eschewen al this drede.
For everich other wey ye can recorde,
Myn herte, y-wis, may not therwith acorde.

218. And hardily, ne dredeth no poverte,
For I have kin and freendes elleswhere
That, though we comen in our bare sherte,

Us sholde neither lakke gold ne gere,
But been honoured whyl we dwelten there.
And go we anoon, for, as in myn entente,
This is the beste, if that ye wole assente.'

219. Criseyde, with a syk, right in this wyse
Answerde, 'y-wis, my dere herte trewe,
We may wel stele away, as ye devyse,
And finde swiche unthrifty weyes newe;
But afterward, ful sore it wol us rewe.
And help me god so at my moste nede
As causeles ye suffren al this drede!

220. For thilke day that I for cherisshinge
Or drede of fader, or of other wight,
Or for estat, delyt, or for weddinge
Be fals to yow, my Troilus, my knight,
Saturnes doughter, Iuno, thorugh hir might,
As wood as Athamante do me dwelle
Eternaly in Stix, the put of helle!

221. And this on every god celestial
I swere it yow, and eek on eche goddesse,
On every Nymphe and deite infernal,
On Satiry and Fauny more and lesse,
That halve goddes been of wildernesse;
And Attropos my threed of lyf tobreste
If I be fals; now trowe me if thow leste!

222. And thou, Simoys, that as an arwe clere
Thorugh Troye rennest ay downward to the see,
Ber witnesse of this word that seyd is here,
That thilke day that ich untrewe be
To Troilus, myn owene herte free,
That thou retorne bakwarde to thy welle,
And I with body and soule sinke in helle!

223. But that ye speke, awey thus for to go
And leten alle your freendes, god for-bede,
For any womman, that ye sholden so,
And namely, sin Troye hath now swich nede
Of help; and eek of o thing taketh hede,
If this were wist, my lif laye in balaunce,
And your honour; god shilde us fro mischaunce!

224. And if so be that pees her-after take,
As alday happeth, after anger, game,
Why, lord! the sorwe and wo ye wolden make,
That ye ne dorste come ayein for shame!
And er that ye Iuparten so your name,
Beth nought to hasty in this hote fare;
For hasty man ne wanteth never care.

225. What trowe ye the peple eek al aboute
Wolde of it seye? It is ful light to arede.
They wolden seye, and swere it, out of doute,
That love ne droof yow nought to doon this dede,
But lust voluptuous and coward drede.

Thus were al lost, ỳ-wis, myn herte dere,
Your honour, which that now shyneth so clere.

226. And also thenketh on myn honestee,
That floureth yet, how foule I sholde it shende,.
And with what filthe it spotted sholde be,
If in this forme I sholde with yow wende.
Ne though I livede un-to the worldes ende,
My name sholde I never ayeinward winne;
Thus were I lost, and that were routhe and sinne.

227. And for-thy slee with reson al this hete;
Men seyn, "the suffraunt overcometh," pardee;
Eek "who-so wol han leef, he leef mot lete;"
Thus maketh vertue of necessitee
By pacience, and thenk that lord is he
Of fortune ay, that nought wol of hir recche;
And she ne daunteth no wight but a wrecche.

228. And trusteth this, that certes, herte swete,
Er Phebus suster, Lucina the shene,
The Leoun passe out of this Ariete,
I wol ben here, with-outen any wene.
I mene, as helpe me Iuno, hevenes quene,
The tenthe day, but-if that deeth me assayle,
I wol yow seen, with-outen any fayle.'

229. 'And now, so this be sooth,' quod Troilus,
'I shal wel suffre un-to the tenthe day,
Sin that I see that nede it moot be thus.
But, for the love of god, if it be may,
So lat us stele prively away;
For ever in oon, as for to live in reste,
Myn herte seyth that it wol been the beste.'

230. 'O mercy, god, what lyf is this?' quod she;
'Allas, ye slee me thus for verray tene!
I see wel now that ye mistrusten me;
For by your wordes it is wel y-sene.
Now, for the love of Cynthia the shene,
Mistrust me not thus causeles, for routhe;
Sin to be trewe I have yow plight my trouthe.

231. And thenketh wel, that som tyme it is wit
To spende a tyme, a tyme for to winne;
Ne, pardee, lorn am I nought fro yow yit,
Though that we been a day or two a-twinne.
Dryf out the fantasyes yow withinne;
And trusteth me, and leveth eek your sorwe,
Or here my trouthe, I wol not live til morwe.

232. For if ye wiste how sore it doth me smerte,
Ye wolde cesse of this; for god, thou wost,
The pure spirit wepeth in myn herte,
To see yow wepen that I love most,
And that I moot gon to the Grekes ost.
Ye, nere it that I wiste remedye
To come ayein, right here I wolde dye!

233. But certes, I am not so nyce a wight

That I ne can imaginen a way
To come ayein that day that I have hight.
For who may holde thing that wol a-way?
My fader nought, for al his queynte pley.
And by my thrift, my wending out of Troye
Another day shal torne us alle to Ioye.

234. For-thy, with al myn herte I yow beseke,
If that yow list don ought for my preyere,
And for the love which that I love yow eke,
That er that I departe fro yow here,
That of so good a comfort and a chere
I may you seen, that ye may bringe at reste
Myn herte, which that is at point to breste.

235. And over al this, I pray yow,' quod she tho,
'Myn owene hertes sooth fast suffisaunce,
Sin I am thyn al hool, with-outen mo,
That whyl that I am absent, no plesaunce
Of othere do me fro your remembraunce.
For I am ever a-gast, for-why men rede,
That "love is thing ay ful of bisy drede."

236. For in this world ther liveth lady noon,
If that ye were untrewe, as god defende!
That so bitraysed were or wo bigoon
As I, that alle trouthe in yow entende.
And douteles, if that ich other wende,
I nere but deed; and er ye cause finde,
For goddes love, so beth me not unkinde.'

237. To this answerde Troilus and seyde,
'Now god, to whom ther nis no cause y-wrye,
Me glade, as wis I never un-to Criseyde,
Sin thilke day I saw hir first with yë,
Was fals, ne never shal til that I dye.
At shorte wordes, wel ye may me leve;
I can no more, it shal be founde at preve.'

238. 'Graunt mercy, goode myn, y-wis,' quod she,
'And blisful Venus lat me never sterve
Er I may stonde of plesaunce in degree
To quyte him wel, that so wel can deserve;
And whyl that god my wit wol me conserve,
I shal so doon, so trewe I have yow founde,
That ay honour to me-ward shal rebounde.

239. For trusteth wel, that your estat royal
Ne veyn delyt, nor only worthinesse
Of yow in werre, or torney marcial
Ne pompe, array, nobley, or eek richesse,
Ne made me to rewe on your distresse;
But moral vertue, grounded upon trouthe,
That was the cause I first hadde on yow routhe!

240. Eek gentil herte and manhod that ye hadde,
And that ye hadde, as me thoughte, in despyt
Every thing that souned in-to badde,
As rudenesse and poeplish appetyt;

And that your reson brydled your delyt,
This made, aboven every creature,
That I was your, and shal, whyl I may dure.

241. And this may lengthe of yeres not for-do,
Ne remuable fortune deface;
But Iuppiter, that of his might may do
The sorwful to be glad, so yeve us grace,
Er nightes ten, to meten in this place,
So that it may your herte and myn suffyse;
And fareth now wel, for tyme is that ye ryse.'

242. And after that they longe y-pleyned hadde,
And ofte y-kist and streite in armes folde,
The day gan ryse, and Troilus him cladde,
And rewfulliche his lady gan biholde,
As he that felte dethes cares colde.
And to hir grace he gan him recomaunde;
Wher him was wo, this holde I no demaunde.

243. For mannes heed imaginen ne can,
Ne entendement considere, ne tonge telle
The cruel peynes of this sorwful man,
That passen every torment doun in helle.
For whan he saugh that she ne mighte dwelle,
Which that his soule out of his herte rente,
With-outen more, out of the chaumbre he wente.

Explicit Liber Quartus.

BOOK V.

INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

1. APROCHEN gan the fatal destinee
That Ioves hath in disposicioun,
And to yow, angry Parcas, sustren three,
Committeth, to don execucioun;
For which Criseyde moste out of the toun,
And Troilus shal dwelle forth in pyne
Til Lachesis his threed no lenger twyne. —

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2. THE golden-tressed Phebus heighe on-lofte
Thryës hadde alle with his bemes shene
The snowes molte, and Zephirus as ofte
Y-brought ayein the tendre leves grene,
Sin that the sone of Ecuba the quene
Bigan to love hir first, for whom his sorwe
Was al, that she departe sholde a-morwe.

3. Ful redy was at pryme Dyomede,
Criseyde un-to the Grekes ost to lede,
For sorwe of which she felte hir herte blede,
As she that niste what was best to rede.
And trewely, as men in bokes rede,
Men wiste never womman han the care,
Ne was so looth out of a toun to fare.

4. This Troilus, with-outen reed or lore,
As man that hath his Ioyes eek forlore,

Was waytinge on his lady evermore
As she that was the soothfast crop and more
Of al his lust, or Ioyes here-tofore.
But Troilus, now farewel al thy Ioye,
For shaltow never seen hir eft in Troye!

5. Soth is, that whyl he bood in this manere,
He gan his wo ful manly for to hyde,
That wel unnethe it seen was in his chere;
But at the yate ther she sholde oute ryde
With certeyn folk, he hoved hir tabyde,
So wo bigoon, al wolde he nought him pleyne,
That on his hors unnethe he sat for peyne.

6. For ire he quook, so gan his herte gnawe,
Whan Diomede on horse gan him dresse,
And seyde un-to him-self this ilke sawe,
'Allas,' quod he, 'thus foul a wrecchednesse
Why suffre ich it, why nil ich it redresse?
Were it not bet at ones for to dye
Than ever-more in langour thus to drye?

7. Why nil I make at ones riche and pore
To have y-nough to done, er that she go?
Why nil I bringe al Troye upon a rore?
Why nil I sleen this Diomede also?
Why nil I rather with a man or two
Stele hir a-way? Why wol I this endure?
Why nil I helpen to myn owene cure?'

8. But why he nolde doon so fel a dede,
That shal I seyn, and why him liste it spare:
He hadde in herte alwey a maner drede,
Lest that Criseyde, in rumour of this fare,
Sholde han ben slayn; lo, this was al his care.
And elles, certeyn, as I seyde yore,
He hadde it doon, with-outen wordes more.

9. Criseyde, whan she redy was to ryde,
Ful sorwfully she sighte, and seyde 'allas!'
But forth she moot, for ought that may bityde,
And forth she rit ful sorwfully a pas.
Ther nis non other remedie in this cas.
What wonder is though that hir sore smerte,
Whan she forgoth hir owene swete herte?

10. This Troilus, in wyse of curteisye,
With hauke on hond, and with an huge route
Of knightes, rood and dide hir companye,
Passinge al the valey fer with-oute.
And ferther wolde han riden, out of doute,
Ful fayn, and wo was him to goon so sone;
But torne he moste, and it was eek to done.

11. And right with that was Antenor y-come
Out of the Grekes ost, and every wight
Was of it glad, and seyde he was wel-come.
And Troilus, al nere his herte light,
He peyned him with al his fulle might
Him to with-holde of wepinge at the leste,
And Antenor he kiste, and made feste.

12. And ther-with-al he moste his leve take,
And caste his eye upon hir pitously,
And neer he rood, his cause for to make,
To take hir by the honde al sobrely.
And lord! so she gan wepen tendrely!
And he ful softe and sleighly gan hir seye,
'Now hold your day, and dooth me not to deye.'

13. With that his courser torned he a-boute
With face pale, and un-to Diomede
No word he spak, ne noon of al his route;
Of which the sone of Tydeus took hede,
As he that coude more than the crede
In swich a craft, and by the reyne hir hente;
And Troilus to Troye homwarde he wente.

14. This Diomede, that ladde hir by the brydel,
Whan that he saw the folk of Troye aweye,
Thoughte, 'al my labour shal not been on ydel,
If that I may, for somwhat shal I seye.
For at the worste it may yet shorte our weye.
I have herd seyd, eek tymes twyës twelve,
"He is a fool that wol for-yete himselve."'

15. But natheles this thoughte he wel ynough,
'That certaynly I am aboute nought
If that I speke of love, or make it tough;
For douteles, if she have in hir thought
Him that I gesse, he may not been y-brought
So sone awey; but I shal finde a mene,
That she not wite as yet shal what I mene.'

16. This Diomede, as he that coude his good,
Whan this was doon, gan fallen forth in speche
Of this and that, and asked why she stood
In swich disese, and gan hir eek biseche,
That if that he encrese mighte or eche
With any thing hir ese, that she sholde
Comaunde it him, and seyde he doon it wolde.

17. For trewely he swoor hir, as a knight,
That ther nas thing with whiche he mighte hir plese,
That he nolde doon his peyne and al his might
To doon it, for to doon hir herte an ese.
And preyede hir, she wolde hir sorwe apese,
And seyde, 'y-wis, we Grekes con have Ioye
To honouren yow, as wel as folk of Troye.'

18. He seyde eek thus, 'I woot, yow thinketh straunge,
No wonder is, for it is to yow newe,
Thaqueintaunce of these Troianes to chaunge,
For folk of Grece, that ye never knewe.
But wolde never god but-if as trewe
A Greek ye shulde among us alle finde
As any Troian is, and eek as kinde.

19. And by the cause I swoor yow right, lo, now,
To been your freend, and helply, to my might,
And for that more acqueintaunce eek of yow
Have ich had than another straunger wight,

So fro this forth I pray yow, day and night,
Comaundeth me, how sore that me smerte,
To doon al that may lyke un-to your herte;

20. And that ye me wolde as your brother trete,
And taketh not my frendship in despyt;
And though your sorwes be for thinges grete,
Noot I not why, but out of more respyt,
Myn herte hath for to amende it greet delyt.
And if I may your harmes not redresse,
I am right sory for your hevinesse.

21. And though ye Troians with us Grekes wrothe
Han many a day be, alwey yet, pardee,
O god of love in sooth we serven bothe.
And, for the love of god, my lady free,
Whom so ye hate, as beth not wroth with me.
For trewely, ther can no wight yow serve,
That half so looth your wraththe wolde deserve.

22. And nere it that we been so neigh the tente
Of Calkas, which that seen us bothe may,
I wolde of this yow telle al myn entente;
But this enseled til another day.
Yeve me your hond, I am, and shal ben ay,
God help me so, whyl that my lyf may dure,
Your owene aboven every creature.

23. Thus seyde I never er now to womman born;
For god myn herte as wisly glade so,
I lovede never womman here-biforn
As paramours, ne never shal no mo.
And, for the love of god, beth not my fo;
Al can I not to yow, my lady dere,
Compleyne aright, for I am yet to lere.

24. And wondreth not, myn owene lady bright,
Though that I speke of love to you thus blyve;
For I have herd or this of many a wight,
Hath loved thing he never saugh his lyve.
Eek I am not of power for to stryve
Ayens the god of love, but him obeye
I wol alwey, and mercy I yow preye.

25. Ther been so worthy knightes in this place
And ye so fair, that everich of hem alle
Wol peynen him to stonden in your grace.
But mighte me so fair a grace falle,
That ye me for your servaunt wolde calle,
So lowly ne so trewely you serve
Nil noon of hem, as I shal, til I sterve.'

26. Criseide un-to that purpos lyte answerde,
As she that was with sorwe oppressed so
That, in effect, she nought his tales herde,
But here and there, now here a word or two.
Hir thoughte hir sorwful herte brast a-two.
For whan she gan hir fader fer aspye,
Wel neigh doun of hir hors she gan to sye.

27. But natheles she thonked Diomede
Of al his travaile, and his goode chere,
And that him liste his friendship hir to bede;
And she accepteth it in good manere,

And wolde do fayn that is him leef and dere;
And trusten him she wolde, and wel she mighte,
As seyde she, and from hir hors she alighte.

28. Hir fader hath hir in his armes nome,
And tweynty tyme he kiste his doughter swete,
And seyde, 'O dere doughter myn, wel-come!'
She seyde eek, she was fayn with him to mete,
And stood forth mewet, mildë, and mansuete.
But here I leve hir with hir fader dwelle,
And forth I wol of Troilus yow telle.

29. To Troye is come this woful Troilus,
In sorwe aboven alle sorwes smerte,
With felon look, and face dispitous.
Tho sodeinly doun from his hors he sterte,
And thorugh his paleys, with a swollen herte,
To chambre he wente; of no-thing took he hede,
Ne noon to him dar speke a word for drede.

30. And there his sorwes that he spared hadde
He yaf an issue large, and 'deeth!' he cryde;
And in his throwes frenetyk and madde
He cursed Iove, Appollo, and eek Cupyde,
He cursed Ceres, Bacus, and Cipryde,
His burthe, him-self, his fate, and eek nature,
And, save his lady, every creature.

31. To bedde he goth, and weyleth there and torneth
In furie, as dooth he, Ixion, in helle,
And in this wyse he neigh til day soiorneth.
But tho bigan his herte a lyte unswelle
Thorugh teres which that gonnen up to welle;
And pitously he cryde up-on Criseyde,
And to him-self right thus he spak, and seyde:—

32. 'Wher is myn owene lady lief and dere,
Wher is hir whyte brest, wher is it, where?
Wher ben hir armes and hir eyen clere,
That yesternight this tyme with me were?
Now may I wepe allone many a tere,
And graspe aboute I may, but in this place,
Save a pilowe, I finde nought ten-brace.

33. How shal I do? Whan shal she com ayeyn?
I noot, allas! why leet ich hir to go?
As wolde god, ich hadde as tho be sleyn?
O herte myn, Criseyde, O swete fo!
O lady myn, that I love and no mo!
To whom for ever-mo myn herte I dowe;
See how I deye, ye nil me not rescowe!

34. Who seeth yow now, my righte lode-sterre?
Who sit right now or stant in your presence?
Who can conforten now your hertes werre?
Now I am gon, whom yeve ye audience?
Who speketh for me right now in myn absence?
Allas, no wight; and that is al my care;
For wel wot I, as yvel as I ye fare.

35. How shulde I thus ten dayes ful endure,
Whan I the firste night have al this tene?
How shal she doon eek, sorwful creature?

For tendernesse, how shal she this sustene,
Swich wo for me? O pitous, pale, and grene
Shal been your fresshe wommanliche face
For langour, er ye torne un-to this place.'

36. And whan he fil in any slomeringes,
Anoon biginne he sholde for to grone,
And dremen of the dredfulleste thinges
That mighte been; as, mete he were allone
In place horrible, makinge ay his mone,
Or meten that he was amonges alle
His enemys, and in hir hondes falle.

37. And ther-with-al his body sholde sterte,
And with the stert al sodeinliche awake,
And swich a tremour fele aboute his herte,
That of the feer his body sholde quake;
And there-with-al he sholde a noyse make,
And seme as though he sholde falle depe
From heighe a-lofte; and than he wolde wepe,

38. And rewen on him-self so pitously,
That wonder was to here his fantasye.
Another tyme he sholde mightily
Conforte him-self, and seyn it was folye,
So causeles swich drede for to drye,
And eft biginne his aspre sorwes newe,
That every man mighte on his sorwes rewe.

39. Who coude telle aright or ful discryve
His wo, his pleynte, his langour, and his pyne?
Nought al the men that han or been on-lyve.
Thou, redere, mayst thy-self ful wel devyne
That swich a wo my wit can not defyne.
On ydel for to wryte it sholde I swinke,
Whan that my wit is wery it to thinke.

40. On hevene yet the sterres were sene,
Al-though ful pale y-waxen was the mone;
And whyten gan the orisonte shene
Al estward, as it woned is to done.
And Phebus with his rosy carte sone
Gan after that to dresse him up to fare,
Whan Troilus hath sent after Pandare.

41. This Pandare, that of al the day biforn
Ne mighte have comen Troilus to see,
Al-though he on his heed it hadde y-sworn,
For with the king Pryam alday was he,
So that it lay not in his libertee
No-wher to gon, but on the morwe he wente
To Troilus, whan that he for him sente.

42. For in his herte he coude wel devyne,
That Troilus al night for sorwe wook;
And that he wolde telle him of his pyne,
This knew he wel y-nough, without book.
For which to chaumbre streight the wey he took,
And Troilus tho sobreliche he grette,

And on the bed ful sone he gan him sette.

43. 'My Pandarus,' quod Troilus, 'the sorwe
Which that I drye, I may not longe endure.
I trowe I shal not liven til tomorwe;
For whiche I wolde alwey, on aventure,
To thee devysen of my sepulture
The forme, and of my moeble thou dispone
Right as thee semeth best is for to done.

44. But of the fyr and flaumbe funeral
In whiche my body brenne shal to glede,
And of the feste and pleyes palestral
At my vigile, I pray thee take good hede
That al be wel; and offre Mars my stede,
My swerd, myn helm, and, leve brother dere,
My sheld to Pallas yef, that shyneth clere.

45. The poudre in which myn herte y-brend shal torne,
That preye I thee thou take and it conserve
In a vessel, that men clepeth an urne,
Of gold, and to my lady that I serve,
For love of whom thus pitously I sterve,
So yeve it hir, and do me this plesaunce,
To preye hir kepe it for a remembraunce.

46. For wel I fele, by my maladye,
And by my dremes now and yore ago,
Al certeinly, that I mot nedes dye.
The owle eek, which that hight Ascaphilo,
Hath after me shright alle thise nightes two.

And, god Mercurie! of me now, woful wrecche,
The soule gyde, and, whan thee list, it fecche!'

47. Pandare answerde, and seyde, 'Troilus,
My dere freend, as I have told thee yore,
That it is folye for to sorwen thus,
And causeles, for whiche I can no-more.
But who-so wol not trowen reed ne lore,
I can not seen in him no remedye,
But lete him worthen with his fantasye.

48. But Troilus, I pray thee tel me now,
If that thou trowe, er this, that any wight
Hath loved paramours as wel as thou?
Ye, god wot, and fro many a worthy knight
Hath his lady goon a fourtenight,
And he not yet made halvendel the fare.
What nede is thee to maken al this care?

49. Sin day by day thou mayst thy-selven see
That from his love, or elles from his wyf,
A man mot twinnen of necessitee,
Ye, though he love hir as his owene lyf;
Yet nil he with him-self thus maken stryf.
For wel thow wost, my leve brother dere,
That alwey freendes may nought been y-fere.

50. How doon this folk that seen hir loves wedded
By freendes might, as it bi-tit ful ofte,
And seen hem in hir spouses bed y-bedded?

God woot, they take it wysly, faire and softe.
For-why good hope halt up hir herte on-lofte,
And for they can a tyme of sorwe endure;
As tyme hem hurt, a tyme doth hem cure.

51. So sholdestow endure, and late slyde
The tyme, and fonde to ben glad and light.
Ten dayes nis so longe not tabyde.
And sin she thee to comen hath bihight,
She nil hir hestes breken for no wight.
For dred thee not that she nil finden weye
To come ayein, my lyf that dorste I leye.

52. Thy swevenes eek and al swich fantasye
Dryf out, and lat hem faren to mischaunce;
For they procede of thy malencolye,
That doth thee fele in sleep al this penaunce,
A straw for alle swevenes signifiaunce!
God helpe me so, I counte hem not a bene,
Ther woot no man aright what dremes mene.

53. For prestes of the temple tellen this,
That dremes been the revelaciouns
Of goddes, and as wel they telle, y-wis,
That they ben infernals illusiouns;
And leches seyn, that of complexiouns
Proceden they, or fast, or glotonye.
Who woot in sooth thus what they signifye?

54. Eek othere seyn that thorugh impressiouns,
As if a wight hath faste a thing in minde,
That ther-of cometh swiche avisiouns;
And othere seyn, as they in bokes finde,
That, after tymes of the yeer by kinde,
Men dreme, and that theffect goth by the mone;
But leve no dreem, for it is nought to done.

55. Wel worth of dremes ay thise olde wyves,
And treweliche eek augurie of thise foules;
For fere of which men wenen lese her lyves,
As ravenes qualm, or shryking of thise oules.
To trowen on it bothe fals and foul is.
Allas, allas, so noble a creature
As is a man, shal drede swich ordure!

56. For which with al myn herte I thee beseche,
Un-to thy-self that al this thou forgyive;
And rys up now with-oute more speche,
And lat us caste how forth may best be drive
This tyme, and eek how freshly we may live
Whan that she cometh, the which shal be right sone;
God help me so, the beste is thus to done.

57. Rys, lat us speke of lusty lyf in Troye
That we han lad, and forth the tyme dryve;
And eek of tyme cominge us reioye,
That bringen shal our blisse now so blyve;
And langour of these twyës dayes fyve
We shal ther-with so foryete or oppresse,

That wel unnethe it doon shal us duresse.

58. This toun is ful of lordes al aboute,
And trewes lasten al this mene whyle.
Go we pleye us in som lusty route
To Sarpedon, not hennes but a myle.
And thus thou shalt the tyme wel bigyle,
And dryve it forth un-to that blisful morwe,
That thou hir see, that cause is of thy sorwe.

59. Now rys, my dere brother Troilus;
For certes, it noon honour is to thee
To wepe, and in thy bed to iouken thus.
For trewely, of o thing trust to me,
If thou thus ligge a day, or two, or three,
The folk wol wene that thou, for cowardyse,
Thee feynest syk, and that thou darst not ryse.'

60. This Troilus answerde, 'O brother dere,
This knowen folk that han y-suffred peyne,
That though he wepe and make sorwful chere,
That feleth harm and smert in every veyne,
No wonder is; and though I ever pleyne,
Or alwey wepe, I am no-thing to blame,
Sin I have lost the cause of al my game.

61. But sin of fyne force I moot aryse,
I shal aryse, as sone as ever I may;
And god, to whom myn herte I sacrifyse,
So sende us hastely the tenthe day!
For was ther never fowl so fayn of May,
As I shal been, whan that she cometh in Troye,
That cause is of my torment and my Ioye.

62. But whider is thy reed,' quod Troilus,
'That we may pleye us best in al this toun?'
By god, my conseil is,' quod Pandarus,
'To ryde and pleye us with king Sarpedoun.'
So longe of this they speken up and doun,
Til Troilus gan at the laste assente
To ryse, and forth to Sarpedoun they wente.

63. This Sarpedoun, as he that honourable
Was ever his lyve, and ful of heigh prowesse,
With al that mighte y-served been on table,
That deyntee was, al coste it greet richesse,
He fedde hem day by day, that swich noblesse,
As seyden bothe the moste and eek the leste,
Was never er that day wist at any feste.

64. Nor in this world ther is non instrument
Delicious, through wind, or touche, or corde,
As fer as any wight hath ever y-went,
That tonge telle or herte may recorde,
That at that feste it nas wel herd acorde;
Ne of ladies eek so fayr a compayne
On daunce, er tho, was never y-seyn with yë.

65. But what avayleth this to Troilus,
That for his sorwe no-thing of it roughte?
For ever in oon his herte piëtous
Ful bisily Criseyde his lady soughte.
On hir was ever al that his herte thoughte.
Now this, now that, so faste imagininge,
That glade, y-wis, can him no festeyinge.

These ladies eek that at this feste been,
Sin that he saw his lady was a-weye,
It was his sorwe upon hem for to seen,
Or for to here on instrumentz so pleye.
For she, that of his herte berth the keye,
Was absent, lo, this was his fantasye,
That no wight sholde make melodye.

Nor ther nas houre in al the day or night,
Whan he was ther-as no wight mighte him here,
That he ne seyde, 'O lufsom lady bright,
How have ye faren, sin that ye were here?
Wel-come, y-wis, myn owene lady dere,'
But welaway, al this nas but a mase;
Fortune his howve entended bet to glase.

The lettres eek, that she of olde tyme
Hadde him y-sent, he wolde allone rede,
An hundred sythe, a-twixen noon and pryme;
Refiguringe hir shap, hir womanhede,
With-inne his herte, and every word and dede
That passed was, and thus he droof to an ende
The ferthe day, and seyde, he wolde wende.

And seyde, 'leve brother Pandarus,
Intendestow that we shul herë bleve
Til Sarpedoun wol forth congeyen us?
Yet were it fairer that we toke our leve.
For goddes love, lat us now sone at eve
Our leve take, and homward lat us torne;
For trewely, I nil not thus soiorne.'

Pandare answerde, 'be we comen hider
To fecchen fyr, and rennen hoom ayeyn?
God helpe me so, I can not tellen whider
We mighten goon, if I shal soothly seyn,
Ther any wight is of us more fayn
Than Sarpedoun; and if we hennes hye
Thus sodeinly, I holde it vilanye,

Sin that we seyden that we wolde bleve
With him a wouke; and now, thus sodeinly,
The ferthe day to take of him our leve,
He wolde wondren on it, trewely!
Lat us holde forth our purpos fermely;
And sin that ye bihighten him to byde,
Hold forward now, and after lat us ryde.'

Thus Pandarus, with alle peyne and wo,
Made him to dwelle; and at the woukes ende,
Of Sarpedoun they toke hir leve tho,
And on hir wey they spedden hem to wende.
Quod Troilus, 'now god me grace sende,
That I may finden, at myn hom-cominge,
Criseyde comen!' and ther-with gan he singe.

'Ye, hasel-wode!' thoughte this Pandare,
And to him-self ful softely he seyde,
'God woot, refreyden may this hote fare
Er Calkas sende Troilus Criseyde!'
But natheles, he laped thus, and seyde,
And swor, y-wis, his herte him wel bihighte,

She wolde come as sone as ever she mighte.

74. Whan they un-to the paleys were y-comen
Of Troilus, they doun of hors alighte,
And to the chambre hir wey than han they nomen.
And in-to tyme that it gan to nighte,
They spaken of Crisëyde the brighte.
And after this, whan that hem bothe leste,
They spedde hem fro the soper un-to reste.

75. On morwe, as sone as day bigan to clere,
This Troilus gan of his sleep tabreyde,
And to Pandare, his owene brother dere,
'For love of god,' ful pitously he seyde,
'As go we seen the paleys of Criseyde;
For sin we yet may have namore feste,
So lat us seen hir paleys at the leste.'

76. And ther-with-al, his meyne for to blende,
A cause he fond in toune for to go,
And to Criseydes hous they gonnen wende.
But lord! this sely Troilus was wo!
Him thoughte his sorweful herte braste a-two.
For whan he saugh hir dores sperred alle,
Wel neigh for sorwe a-doun he gan to falle.

77. Therwith whan he was war and gan biholde
How shet was every windowe of the place,
As frost, him thoughte, his herte gan to colde;
For which with chaunged deedlich pale face,
With-outen word, he forth bigan to pace;
And, as god wolde, he gan so faste ryde,
That no wight of his contenaunce aspyde.

78. Than seyde he thus, 'O paleys desolat,
O hous, of houses whylom best y-hight,
O paleys empty and disconsolat,
O thou lanterne, of which queynt is the light,
O paleys, whylom day, that now art night,
Wel oughtestow to falle, and I to dye,
Sin she is went that wont was us to gye!

79. O paleys, whylom croune of houses alle,
Enlumined with sonne of alle blisse!
O ring, fro which the ruby is outfalle,
O cause of wo, that cause hast been of lisse!
Yet, sin I may no bet, fayn wolde I kisse
Thy colde dores, dorste I for this route;
And fare-wel shryne, of which the seynt is oute!'

80. Ther-with he caste on Pandarus his yë
With chaunged face, and pitous to biholde;
And whan he mighte his tyme aright aspye,
Ay as he rood, to Pandarus he tolde
His newe sorwe, and eek his Ioyes olde,
So pitously and with so dede an hewe,
That every wight mighte on his sorwe rewe.

81. Fro thennesforth he rydeth up and doun,

And every thing com him to remembraunce
As he rood forth by places of the toun
In whiche he whylom hadde al his plesaunce.
'Lo, yond saugh I myn owene lady daunce;
And in that temple, with hir eyen clere,
Me caughte first my righte lady dere.

82. And yonder have I herd ful lustily
My dere herte laughe, and yonder pleye
Saugh I hir ones eek ful blisfully.
And yonder ones to me gan she seye,
"Now goode swete, love me wel, I preye."
And yond so goodly gan she me biholde,
That to the deeth myn herte is to hir holde.

83. And at that corner, in the yonder hous,
Herde I myn alderlevest lady dere
So wommanly, with voys melodious,
Singen so wel, so goodly, and so clere,
That in my soule yet me thinketh I here
The blisful soun; and, in that yonder place,
My lady first me took un-to hir grace.'

84. Thanne thoughte he thus, 'O blisful lord Cupyde,
Whanne I the proces have in my memorie,
How thou me hast werreyed on every syde,
Men mighte a book make of it, lyk a storie.
What nede is thee to seke on me victorie,
Sin I am thyn, and hoolly at thy wille?
What Ioye hastow thyn owene folk to spille?

85. Wel hastow, lord, y-wroke on me thyn ire,
Thou mighty god, and dredful for to greve!
Now mercy, lord, thou wost wel I desire
Thy grace most, of alle lustes leve.
And live and deye I wol in thy bileve;
For which I naxe in guerdon but a bone,
That thou Criseyde ayein me sende sone.

86. Distreyne hir herte as faste to retorne
As thou dost myn to longen hir to see;
Than woot I wel, that she nil not soiorne.
Now, blisful lord, so cruel thou ne be
Un-to the blood of Troye, I preye thee,
As Iuno was un-to the blood Thebane,
For which the folk of Thebes caughte hir bane.'

87. And after this he to the yates wente
Ther-as Criseyde out-rood a ful good paas,
And up and doun ther made he many a wente,
And to him-self ful ofte he seyde 'allas!
From hennes rood my blisse and my solas!
As wolde blisful god now, for his Ioye,
I mighte hir seen ayein come in-to Troye.

88. And to the yonder hille I gan hir gyde,
Allas! and there I took of hir my leve!
And yond I saugh hir to hir fader ryde,

For sorwe of which myn herte shal to-cleve.
And hider hoom I com whan it was eve;
And here I dwelle out-cast from alle Ioye,
And shal, til I may seen hir eft in Troye.'

89. And of him-self imagined he ofte
To ben defet, and pale, and waxen lesse
Than he was wont, and that men seyde softe,
'What may it be? who can the sothe gesse
Why Troilus hath al this hevinesse?'
And al this nas but his malencolye,
That he hadde of him-self swich fantasye.

90. Another tyme imaginen he wolde
That every wight that wente by the weye
Had of him routhe, and that they seyen sholde,
'I am right sory Troilus wol deye.'
And thus he droof a day yet forth or tweye.
As ye have herd, swich lyf right gan he lede,
As he that stood bitwixen hope and drede.

91. For which him lyked in his songes shewe
Thencheson of his wo, as he best mighte,
And make a song of wordes but a fewe,
Somwhat his woful herte for to lighte.
And whan he was from every mannes sighte,
With softe voys he, of his lady dere,
That was absent, gan singe as ye may here.

92. 'O sterre, of which I lost have al the light,
With herte sore wel oughte I to bewayle,
That ever derk in torment, night by night,
Toward my deeth with wind in stere I sayle;
For which the tenthe night if that I fayle
The gyding of thy bemes brighte an houre,
My ship and me Caribdis wol devoure.'

93. This song when he thus songen hadde, sone
He fil ayein in-to his sykes olde;
And every night, as was his wone to done,
He stood the brighte mone to beholde,
And al his sorwe he to the mone tolde;
And seyde, 'y-wis, whan thou art horned newe,
I shal be glad, if al the world be trewe!

94. I saugh thyn hornes olde eek by the morwe,
Whan hennes rood my righte lady dere,
That cause is of my torment and my sorwe;
For whiche, O brighte Lucina the clere,
For love of god, ren faste aboute thy spere!
For whan thyn hornes newe ginne springe,
Than shal she come, that may my blisse bringe!'

95. The day is more, and lenger every night,
Than they be wont to be, him thoughte tho;
And that the sonne wente his course unright
By lenger wey than it was wont to go;
And seyde, 'y-wis, me dredeth ever mo,
The sonnes sone, Pheton, be onlyve,
And that his fadres cart amis he dryve.'

96. Upon the walles faste eek wolde he walke,
And on the Grekes ost he wolde see,
And to him-self right thus he wolde talke,
'Lo, yonder is myn owene lady free,
Or elles yonder, ther tho tentes be!
And thennes comth this eyr, that is so sote,
That in my soule I fele it doth me bote.

97. And hardely this wind, that more and more
Thus stoundemele encreseth in my face,
Is of my ladyes depe sykes sore.
I preve it thus, for in non othere place
Of al this toun, save onliche in this space,
Fele I no wind that soundeth so lyk peyne;
It seyth, "allas! why twinned be we tweyne?"'

98. This longe tyme he dryveth forth right thus,
Til fully passed was the nynthe night;
And ay bi-syde him was this Pandarus,
That bisily dide alle his fulle might
Him to comforte, and make his herte light;
Yevinge him hope alwey, the tenthe morwe
That she shal come, and stinten al his sorwe.

99. Up-on that other syde eek was Criseyde,
With wommen fewe, among the Grekes stronge;
For which ful ofte a day 'allas!' she seyde,
'That I was born! Wel may myn herte longe
After my deeth; for now live I to longe!
Allas! and I ne may it not amende;
For now is wors than ever yet I wende.

100. My fader nil for no-thing do me grace
To goon ayein, for nought I can him queme;
And if so be that I my terme passe,
My Troilus shal in his herte deme
That I am fals, and so it may wel seme.
Thus shal I have unthank on every syde;
That I was born, so weylawey the tyde!

101. And if that I me putte in Iupartye,
To stele awey by nighte, and it bifalle
That I be caught, I shal be holde a spye;
Or elles, lo, this drede I most of alle,
If in the hondes of som wrecche I falle,
I am but lost, al be myn herte trewe;
Now mighty god, thou on my sorwe rewe!'

102. Ful pale y-waxen was hir brighte face,
Hir limes lene, as she that al the day
Stood whan she dorste, and loked on the place
Ther she was born, and ther she dwelt hadde ay.
And al the night wepinge, allas! she lay.
And thus despeired, out of alle cure,
She ladde hir lyf, this woful creature.

103. Ful ofte a day she sighte eek for destresse,
And in hir-self she wente ay portrayinge
Of Troilus the grete worthinesse,
And alle his goodly wordes recordinge
Sin first that day hir love bigan to springe.
And thus she sette hir woful herte a-fyre

Thorugh remembraunce of that she gan desyre.

104. In al this world ther nis so cruel herte
That hir hadde herd compleynen in hir sorwe,
That nolde han wopen for hir peynes smerte,
So tendrely she weep, bothe eve and morwe.
Hir nedede no teres for to borwe.
And this was yet the worste of al hir peyne,
Ther was no wight to whom she dorste hir pleyne.

105. Ful rewfully she loked up-on Troye,
Biheld the toures heighe and eek the halles;
'Allas!' quod she, 'the plesaunce and the Ioye
The whiche that now al torned in-to galle is,
Have I had ofte with-inne yonder walles!
O Troilus, what dostow now,' she seyde;
'Lord! whether yet thou thenke up-on Criseyde?

106. Allas! I ne hadde trowed on your lore,
And went with yow, as ye me radde er this!
Thanne hadde I now not syked half so sore.
Who mighte have seyd, that I had doon a-mis
To stele awey with swich on as he is?
But al to late cometh the letuarie,
Whan men the cors un-to the grave carie.

107. To late is now to speke of this matere;
Prudence, allas! oon of thyn eyen three
Me lakked alwey, er that I cam here;
On tyme y-passed, wel remembred me;
And present tyme eek coude I wel y-see.
But futur tyme, er I was in the snare,
Coude I not seen; that causeth now my care.

108. But natheles, bityde what bityde,
I shal to-morwe at night, by est or weste,
Out of this ost stele on som maner syde,
And go with Troilus wher-as him leste.
This purpos wol I holde, and this is beste.
No fors of wikked tonges Ianglerye,
For ever on love han wrecches had envye.

109. For who-so wole of every word take hede,
Or rewlen him by every wightes wit,
Ne shal he never thryven, out of drede.
For that that som men blamen ever yit,
Lo, other maner folk commenden it.
And as for me, for al swich vari-aunce,
Felicitee slepe I may suffisaunce.

110. For which, with-outen any wordes mo,
To Troye I wol, as for conclusioun.'
But god it wot, er fully monthes two,
She was ful fer fro that entencioun.
For bothe Troilus and Troye toun
Shal knotteles through-out hir herte slyde;
For she wol take a purpos for tabyde.

111. This Diomede, of whom yow telle I gan,
Goth now, with-inne him-self ay arguinge
With al the sleighte and al that ever he can,

How he may best, with shortest taryinge,
In-to his net Criseydes herte bringe.
To this entente he coude never fyne;
To fisshen hir, he leyde out hook and lyne.

112. But natheles, wel in his herte he thoughte,
That she nas nat with-oute a love in Troye.
For never, sithen he hir thennes broughte,
Ne coude he seen her laughe or make Ioye.
He niste how best hir herte for tacoye.
'But for to assaye,' he seyde, 'it nought ne greveth;
For he that nought nassayeth, nought nacheveth.'

113. Yet seide he to him-self upon a night,
'Now am I not a fool, that woot wel how
Hir wo for love is of another wight,
And here-up-on to goon assaye hir now?
I may wel wite, it nil not been my prow.
For wyse folk in bokes it expresse,
"Men shal not wowe a wight in hevinesse."

114. But who-so mighte winnen swich a flour
From him, for whom she morneth night and day,
He mighte seyn, he were a conquerour.'
And right anoon, as he that bold was ay,
Thoughte in his herte, 'happe, how happe may,
Al sholde I deye, I wole hir herte seche;
I shal no more lesen but my speche.'

115. This Diomede, as bokes us declare,
Was in his nedes prest and corageous;
With sterne voys and mighty limes square,
Hardy, testif, strong, and chevalrous
Of dedes, lyk his fader Tideus.
And som men seyn, he was of tunge large;
And heir he was of Calidoine and Arge.

116. Criseyde mene was of hir stature,
Ther-to of shap, of face, and eek of chere,
Ther mighte been no fairer creature.
And ofte tyme this was hir manere,
To gon y-tressed with hir heres clere
Doun by hir coler at hir bak bihinde,
Which with a threde of gold she wolde binde.

117. And, save hir browes ioyneden y-fere,
Ther nas no lak, in ought I can espyen;
But for to speken of hir eyen clere;
Lo, trewely, they writen that hir syen,
That Paradys stood formed in hir yën.
And with hir riche beautee evermore
Strof love in hir, ay which of hem was more.

118. She sobre was, eek simple, and wys with-al,
The beste y-norisshed eek that mighte be,
And goodly of hir speche in general,
Charitable, estatliche, lusty, and free;
Ne never-mo ne lakkede hir pitee;
Tendre-herted, slydinge of corage;
But trewely, I can not telle hir age.

119. And Troilus wel waxen was in highte,
And complet formed by proporcioun
So wel, that kinde it not amenden mighte;
Yong, fresshe, strong, and hardy as lyoun;
Trewe as steel in ech condicioun;
On of the beste enteched creature,
That is, or shal, whyl that the world may dure.

120. And certainly in storie it is y-founde,
That Troilus was never un-to no wight,
As in his tyme, in no degree secounde
In durring don that longeth to a knight.
Al mighte a geaunt passen him of might,
His herte ay with the firste and with the beste
Stod paregal, to durre don that him leste.

121. But for to tellen forth of Diomede:—
It fil that after, on the tenthe day,
Sin that Criseyde out of the citee yede,
This Diomede, as fresshe as braunche in May,
Com to the tente ther-as Calkas lay,
And feyned him with Calkas han to done;
But what he mente, I shal yow telle sone.

122. Criseyde, at shorte wordes for to telle,
Welcomed him, and doun by hir him sette;
And he was ethe y-nough to maken dwelle.
And after this, with-outen longe lette,
The spyces and the wyn men forth hem fette;
And forth they speke of this and that y-fere,
As freendes doon, of which som shal ye here.

123. He gan first fallen of the werre in speche
Bitwixe hem and the folk of Troye toun;
And of thassege he gan hir eek byseche,
To telle him what was hir opinioun.
Fro that demaunde he so descendeth doun
To asken hir, if that hir straunge thoughte
The Grekes gyse, and werkes that they wroughte?

124. And why hir fader tarieth so longe
To wedden hir un-to som worthy wight?
Criseyde, that was in hir peynes stronge
For love of Troilus, hir owene knight,
As fer-forth as she conning hadde or might,
Answerde him tho; but, as of his entente,
It semed not she wiste what he mente.

125. But natheles, this ilke Diomede
Gan in him-self assure, and thus he seyde,
'If ich aright have taken of yow hede,
Me thinketh thus, O lady myn, Criseyde,
That sin I first hond on your brydel leyde,
Whan ye out come of Troye by the morwe,
Ne coude I never seen yow but in sorwe.

126. Can I not seyn what may the cause be
But-if for love of som Troyan it were,

The which right sore wolde athinken me
That ye, for any wight that dwelleth there,
Sholden spille a quarter of a tere,
Or pitously your-selven so bigyle;
For dredelees, it is nought worth the whyle.

127. The folk of Troye, as who seyth, alle and some
In preson been, as ye your-selven see;
For thennes shal not oon on-lyve come
For al the gold bitwixen sonne and see.
Trusteth wel, and understondeth me,
Ther shal not oon to mercy goon on-lyve,
Al were he lord of worldes twyës fyve!

128. Swich wreche on hem, for fecching of Eleyne,
Ther shal be take, er that we hennes wende,
That Manes, which that goddes ben of peyne,
Shal been agast that Grekes wol hem shende.
And men shul drede, un-to the worldes ende,
From hennes-forth to ravisshe any quene,
So cruel shal our wreche on hem be sene.

129. And but-if Calkas lede us with ambages,
That is to seyn, with double wordes slye,
Swich as men clepe a "word with two visages,"
Ye shul wel knowen that I nought ne lye,
And al this thing right seen it with your yë,
And that anoon; ye nil not trowe how sone;
Now taketh heed, for it is for to done.

130. What wene ye your wyse fader wolde
Han yeven Antenor for yow anoon,
If he ne wiste that the citee sholde
Destroyed been? Why, nay, so mote I goon!
He knew ful wel ther shal not scapen oon
That Troyan is; and for the grete fere,
He dorste not, ye dwelte lenger there.

131. What wole ye more, lufsom lady dere?
Lat Troye and Troyan fro your herte pace!
Dryf out that bittre hope, and make good chere,
And clepe ayein the beautee of your face,
That ye with salte teres so deface.
For Troye is brought in swich a Iupartye,
That, it to save, is now no remedye.

132. And thenketh wel, ye shal in Grekes finde
A more parfit love, er it be night,
Than any Troyan is, and more kinde,
And bet to serven yow wol doon his might.
And if ye vouche sauf, my lady bright,
I wol ben he to serven yow myselve,
Ye, lever than be lord of Greces twelve!'

133. And with that word he gan to waxen reed,
And in his speche a litel wight he quook,
And caste a-syde a litel wight his heed,
And stinte a whyle; and afterward awook,
And sobreliche on hir he threw his look,

And seyde, 'I am, al be it yow no Ioye,
As gentil man as any wight in Troye.

134. For if my fader Tydeus,' he seyde,
'Y-lived hadde, I hadde been, er this,
Of Calidoine and Arge a king, Criseyde!
And so hope I that I shal yet, y-wis.
But he was slayn, allas! the more harm is,
Unhappily at Thebes al to rathe,
Polymites and many a man to scathe.

135. But herte myn, sin that I am your man,
And been the ferste of whom I seche grace,
To serven you as hertely as I can,
And ever shal, whyl I to live have space,
So, er that I departe out of this place,
Ye wol me graunte, that I may to-morwe,
At bettre leyser, telle yow my sorwe.'

136. What shold I telle his wordes that he seyde?
He spak y-now, for o day at the meste;
It preveth wel, he spak so that Criseyde
Graunted, on the morwe, at his requeste,
For to speken with him at the leste,
So that he nolde speke of swich matere;
And thus to him she seyde, as ye may here:

137. As she that hadde hir herte on Troilus
So faste, that ther may it noon arace;
And straungely she spak, and seyde thus:

'O Diomede, I love that ilke place
Ther I was born; and Ioves, for his grace,
Delivere it sone of al that doth it care!
God, for thy might, so leve it wel to fare!

138. That Grekes wolde hir wraththe on Troye wreke,
If that they mighte, I knowe it wel, y-wis.
But it shal not bifallen as ye speke;
And god to-forn, and ferther over this,
I wot my fader wys and redy is;
And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde,
So dere, I am the more un-to him holde.

139. That Grekes been of heigh condicioun,
I woot eek wel; but certein, men shal finde
As worthy folk with-inne Troye toun,
As conning, and as parfit and as kinde,
As been bitwixen Orcades and Inde.
And that ye coude wel your lady serve,
I trowe eek wel, hir thank for to deserve.

140. But as to speke of love, y-wis,' she seyde,
'I hadde a lord, to whom I wedded was,
The whos myn herte al was, til that he deyde;
And other love, as helpe me now Pallas,
Ther in myn herte nis, ne never was.
And that ye been of noble and heigh kinrede,
I have wel herd it tellen, out of drede.

141. And that doth me to han so gret a wonder,

That ye wol scornen any womman so.
Eek, god wot, love and I be fer a-sonder;
I am disposed bet, so mote I go,
Un-to my deeth, to pleyne and maken wo.
What I shal after doon, I can not seye;
But trewely, as yet me list not pleye.

142. Myn herte is now in tribulacioun,
And ye in armes bisy, day by day.
Here-after, whan ye wonnen han the toun,
Paraunter, thanne so it happen may,
That whan I see that I never er say,
Than wole I werke that I never wroughte!
This word to yow y-nough suffysen oughte.

143. To-morwe eek wol I speke with yow fayn,
So that ye touchen nought of this matere.
And whan yow list, ye may come here ayeyn;
And, er ye gon, thus muche I seye yow here:
As helpe me Pallas with hir heres clere,
If that I sholde of any Greek han routhe,
It sholde be your-selven, by my trouthe!

144. I sey not therfore that I wol yow love,
Ne I sey not nay, but in conclusioun,
I mene wel, by god that sit above:'—
And ther-with-al she caste hir eyen doun,
And gan to syke, and seyde, 'O Troye toun,
Yet bidde I god, in quiete and in reste
I may yow seen, or do myn herte breste.'

145. But in effect, and shortly for to seye,
This Diomede al freshly newe ayeyn
Gan pressen on, and faste hir mercy preye;
And after this, the sothe for to seyn,
Hir glove he took, of which he was ful fayn.
And fynally, whan it was waxen eve,
And al was wel, he roos and took his leve.

146. The brighte Venus folwede and ay taughte
The wey, ther brode Phebus doun alighte;
And Cynthea hir char-hors over-raughte
To whirle out of the Lyon, if she mighte;
And Signifer his candeles shewed brighte,
Whan that Criseyde un-to hir bedde wente
In-with hir fadres faire brighte tente.

147. Retorning in hir soule ay up and doun
The wordes of this sodein Diomede,
His greet estat, and peril of the toun,
And that she was allone and hadde nede
Of freendes help; and thus bigan to brede
The cause why, the sothe for to telle,
That she tok fully purpos for to dwelle.

148. The morwe com, and goostly for to speke,
This Diomede is come un-to Criseyde,
And shortly, lest that ye my tale breke,

So wel he for him-selve spak and seyde,
That alle hir sykes sore adoun he leyde.
And fynally, the sothe for to seyne,
He refte hir of the grete of al hir peyne.

149. And after this the story telleth us,
That she him yaf the faire baye stede,
The which he ones wan of Troilus;
And eek a broche (and that was litel nede)
That Troilus was, she yaf this Diomede.
And eek, the bet from sorwe him to releve,
She made him were a pencel of hir sleve.

150. I finde eek in the stories elles-where,
Whan through the body hurt was Diomede
Of Troilus, tho weep she many a tere,
Whan that she saugh his wyde woundes blede;
And that she took to kepen him good hede,
And for to hele him of his sorwes smerte.
Men seyn, I not, that she yaf him hir herte.

151. But trewely, the story telleth us,
Ther made never womman more wo
Than she, whan that she falsed Troilus.
She seyde, 'allas! for now is clene a-go
My name of trouthe in love, for ever-mo!
For I have falsed oon, the gentileste
That ever was, and oon the worthieste!

152. Allas, of me, un-to the worldes ende,
Shal neither been y-writen nor y-songe
No good word, for thise bokes wol me shende.
O, rolled shal I been on many a tonge;
Through-out the world my belle shal be ronge;
And wommen most wol hate me of alle.
Allas, that swich a cas me sholde falle!

153. They wol seyn, in as muche as in me is,
I have hem don dishonour, weyl-awey!
Al be I not the firste that dide amis,
What helpeth that to do my blame awey?
But sin I see there is no bettre way,
And that to late is now for me to rewe,
To Diomede algate I wol be trewe.

154. But Troilus, sin I no better may,
And sin that thus departen ye and I,
Yet preye I god, so yeve yow right good day
As for the gentileste, trewely,
That ever I say, to serven feithfully,
And best can ay his lady honour kepe:'—
And with that word she brast anon to wepe.

155. 'And certes, yow ne haten shal I never,
And freendes love, that shal ye han of me,
And my good word, al mighte I liven ever.
And, trewely, I wolde sory be
For to seen yow in adversitee.
And giltelees, I woot wel, I yow leve;
But al shal passe; and thus take I my leve.'

156. But trewely, how longe it was bitwene,

That she for-sook him for this Diomede,
Ther is non auctor telleth it, I wene.
Take every man now to his bokes hede;
He shal no terme finden, out of drede.
For though that he bigan to wowe hir sone,
Er he hir wan, yet was ther more to done.

157. Ne me ne list this sely womman chyde
Ferther than the story wol devyse.
Hir name, allas! is publisshed so wyde,
That for hir gilt it oughte y-now suffyse.
And if I mighte excuse hir any wyse,
For she so sory was for hir untrouthe,
Y-wis, I wolde excuse hir yet for routhe.

158. This Troilus, as I biforn have told,
Thus dryveth forth, as wel as he hath might.
But often was his herte hoot and cold,
And namely, that ilke nynthe night,
Which on the morwe she hadde him byhight
To come ayein: god wot, ful litel reste
Hadde he that night; no-thing to slepe him leste.

159. The laurer-crouned Phebus, with his hete,
Gan, in his course ay upward as he wente,
To warmen of the est see the wawes wete;
And Nisus doughter song with fresh entente,
Whan Troilus his Pandare after sente;
And on the walles of the toun they pleyde,
To loke if they can seen ought of Criseyde.

160. Til it was noon, they stoden for to see
Who that ther come; and every maner wight,
That cam fro fer, they seyden it was she,
Til that they coude knowen him a-right.
Now was his herte dul, now was it light;
And thus by-iaped stonden for to stare
Aboute nought, this Troilus and Pandare.

161. To Pandarus this Troilus tho seyde,
'For ought I wot, bi-for noon, sikerly,
In-to this toun ne comth nought here Criseyde.
She hath y-now to done, hardily,
To winnen from hir fader, so trowe I;
Hir olde fader wol yet make hir dyne
Er that she go; god yeve his herte pyne!'

162. Pandare answerde, 'it may wel be, certeyn;
And for-thy lat us dyne, I thee biseche;
And after noon than mayst thou come ayeyn.'
And hoom they go, with-oute more speche;
And comen ayein, but longe may they seche
Er that they finde that they after cape;
Fortune hem bothe thenketh for to Iape.

163. Quod Troilus, 'I see wel now, that she
Is taried with hir olde fader so,
That er she come, it wol neigh even be.
Com forth, I wol un-to the yate go.
Thise portours been unkonninge ever-mo;
And I wol doon hem holden up the yate

As nought ne were, al-though she come late.'

164. The day goth faste, and after that comth eve,
And yet com nought to Troilus Criseyde.
He loketh forth by hegge, by tree, by greve,
And fer his heed over the wal he leyde.
And at the laste he torned him, and seyde,
'By god, I woot hir mening now, Pandare!
Al-most, y-wis, al newe was my care.

165. Now douteles, this lady can hir good;
I woot, she meneth ryden prively.
I comende hir wysdom, by myn hood!
She wol not maken peple nycely
Gaure on hir, whan she comth; but softely
By nighte in-to the toun she thenketh ryde.
And, dere brother, thenk not longe to abyde.

166. We han nought elles for to don, y-wis.
And Pandarus, now woltow trowen me?
Have here my trouthe, I see hir! yond she is.
Heve up thyn eyen, man! maystow not see?'
Pandare answerde, 'nay, so mote I thee!
Al wrong, by god; what seystow, man, wher art?
That I see yond nis but a fare-cart.'

167. 'Allas, thou seist right sooth,' quod Troilus;
'But hardely, it is not al for nought
That in myn herte I now reioyse thus.
It is ayein som good I have a thought.
Noot I not how, but sin that I was wrought,
Ne felte I swich a confort, dar I seye;
She comth to-night, my lyf, that dorste I leye!'

168. Pandare answerde, 'it may be wel, y-nough';
And held with him of al that ever he seyde;
But in his herte he thoughte, and softe lough,
And to him-self ful sobrely he seyde:
'From hasel-wode, ther Ioly Robin pleyde,
Shal come al that that thou abydest here;
Ye, fare-wel al the snow of ferne yere!'

169. The wardein of the yates gan to calle
The folk which that with-oute the yates were,
And bad hem dryven in hir bestes alle,
Or al the night they moste bleven there.
And fer with-in the night, with many a tere,
This Troilus gan hoomward for to ryde;
For wel he seeth it helpeth nought tabyde.

170. But natheles, he gladded him in this;
He thoughte he misacounted hadde his day,
And seyde, 'I understonde have al a-mis.
For thilke night I last Criseyde say,
She seyde, "I shal ben here, if that I may,
Er that the mone, O dere herte swete!
The Lyon passe, out of this Ariete."

171. For which she may yet holde al hir biheste.'
And on the morwe un-to the yate he wente,

And up and down, by west and eek by este,
Up-on the walles made he many a wente.
But al for nought; his hope alwey him blente;
For which at night, in sorwe and sykes sore
He wente him hoom, with-outen any more.

172. This hope al clene out of his herte fledde,
He nath wher-on now lenger for to honge;
But for the peyne him thoughte his herte bledde,
So were his throwes sharpe and wonder stronge.
For when he saugh that she abood so longe,
He niste what he iuggen of it mighte.
Sin she hath broken that she him bihighte.

173. The thridde, ferthe, fifte, sixte day
After tho dayes ten, of which I tolde,
Bitwixen hope and drede his herte lay,
Yet som-what trustinge on hir hestes olde.
But whan he saugh she nolde hir terme holde,
He can now seen non other remedye,
But for to shape him sone for to dye.

174. Ther-with the wikked spirit, god us blesse,
Which that men clepeth wode Ialousye,
Gan in him crepe, in al this hevinesse;
For which, by-cause he wolde sone dye,
He ne eet ne dronk, for his malencolye,
And eek from every companye he fledde;
This was the lyf that al the tyme he ledde.

175. He so defet was, that no maner man
Unnethe mighte him knowe ther he wente;
So was he lene, and ther-to pale and wan,
And feble, that he walketh by potente;
And with his ire he thus himselven shente.
And who-so axed him wher-of him smerte,
He seyde, his harm was al aboute his herte.

176. Pryam ful ofte, and eek his moder dere,
His bretheren and his sustren gonne him freyne
Why he so sorwful was in al his chere,
And what thing was the cause of al his peyne?
But al for nought; he nolde his cause pleyne,
But seyde, he felte a grevous maladye
A-boute his herte, and fayn he wolde dye.

177. So on a day he leyde him doun to slepe,
And so bifel that in his sleep him thoughte,
That in a forest faste he welk to wepe
For love of hir that him these peynes wroughte;
And up and doun as he the forest soughte,
He mette he saugh a boor with tuskes grete,
That sleep ayein the brighte sonnes hete.

178. And by this boor, faste in his armes folde,
Lay kissing ay his lady bright Criseyde:
For sorwe of which, whan he it gan biholde,

And for despyt, out of his slepe he breyde,
And loude he cryde on Pandarus, and seyde,
'O Pandarus, now knowe I crop and rote!
I nam but deed, ther nis non other bote!

179. My lady bright Criseyde hath me bitrayed,
In whom I trusted most of any wight,
She elles-where hath now hir herte apayed;
The blisful goddes, through hir grete might,
Han in my dreem y-shewed it ful right.
Thus in my dreem Criseyde I have biholde'—
And al this thing to Pandarus he tolde.

180. 'O my Criseyde, allas! what subtiltee,
What newe lust, what beautee, what science,
What wratthe of iuste cause have ye to me?
What gilt of me, what fel experience
Hath fro me raft, allas! thyn advertence?
O trust, O feyth, O depe asëurannce,
Who hath me reft Criseyde, al my plesaunce?

181. Allas! why leet I you from hennes go,
For which wel neigh out of my wit I breyde?
Who shal now trowe on any othes mo?
God wot I wende, O lady bright, Criseyde,
That every word was gospel that ye seyde!
But who may bet bigylen, if him liste,
Than he on whom men weneth best to triste?

182. What shal I doon, my Pandarus, allas!
I fele now so sharpe a newe peyne,
Sin that ther is no remedie in this cas,
That bet were it I with myn hondes tweyne
My-selven slow, than alwey thus to pleyne.
For through my deeth my wo sholde han an ende,
Ther every day with lyf my-self I shende.'

183. Pandare answerde and seyde, 'allas the whyle
That I was born; have I not seyd er this,
That dremes many a maner man bigyle?
And why? for folk expounden hem a-mis.
How darstow seyn that fals thy lady is,
For any dreem, right for thyn owene drede?
Lat be this thought, thou canst no dremes rede.

184. Paraunter, ther thou dremest of this boor,
It may so be that it may signifye
Hir fader, which that old is and eek hoor,
Ayein the sonne lyth, on poynt to dye,
And she for sorwe ginneth wepe and crye,
And kisseth him, ther he lyth on the grounde;
Thus shuldestow thy dreem a-right expounde.'

185. 'How mighte I thanne do?' quod Troilus,
'To knowe of this, ye, were it never so lyte?'
'Now seystow wysly,' quod this Pandarus,
'My reed is this, sin thou canst wel endyte,
That hastely a lettre thou hir wryte,

Thorugh which thou shalt wel bringen it aboute,
To knowe a sooth of that thou art in doute.

186. And see now why; for this I dar wel seyn,
That if so is that she untrewe be,
I can not trowe that she wol wryte ayeyn.
And if she wryte, thou shalt ful sone see,
As whether she hath any libertee
To come ayein, or elles in som clause,
If she be let, she wol assigne a cause.

187. Thou hast not writen hir sin that she wente,
Nor she to thee, and this I dorste leye,
Ther may swich cause been in hir entente,
That hardely thou wolt thy-selven seye,
That hir a-bood the beste is for yow tweye.
Now wryte hir thanne, and thou shalt fele sone
A sothe of al; ther is no more to done.'

188. Acorded been to this conclusioun,
And that anoon, these ilke lordes two;
And hastely sit Troilus adoun,
And rolleth in his herte to and fro,
How he may best discryven hir his wo.
And to Criseyde, his owene lady dere,
He wroot right thus, and seyde as ye may here.

189. 'Right fresshe flour, whos I have been and shal,
With-outen part of elles-where servyse,
With herte, body, lyf, lust, thought, and al;
I, woful wight, in every humble wyse
That tonge telle or herte may devyse,
As ofte as matere occupyeth place,
Me recomaunde un-to your noble grace.

190. Lyketh it yow to witen, swete herte,
As ye wel knowe how longe tyme agoon
That ye me lafte in aspre peynes smerte,
Whan that ye wente, of which yet bote noon
Have I non had, but ever wers bigoon
Fro day to day am I, and so mot dwelle,
While it yow list, of wele and wo my welle!

191. For which to yow, with dredful herte trewe,
I wryte, as he that sorwe dryfth to wryte,
My wo, that every houre encreseth newe,
Compleyninge as I dar or can endyte.
And that defaced is, that may ye wyte
The teres, which that fro myn eyen reyne,
That wolde speke, if that they coude, and pleyne.

192. Yow first biseche I, that your eyen clere
To look on this defouled ye not holde;
And over al this, that ye, my lady dere,
Wol vouche-sauf this lettre to biholde.
And by the cause eek of my cares colde,
That sleeth my wit, if ought amis me asterte,
For-yeve it me, myn owene swete herte.

193. If any servant dorste or oughte of right
Up-on his lady pitously compleyne,
Than wene I, that ich oughte be that wight,
Considered this, that ye these monthes tweyne
Han taried, ther ye seyden, sooth to seyne,
But dayes ten ye nolde in ost soiourne,
But in two monthes yet ye not retourne.

194. But for-as-muche as me mot nedes lyke
Al that yow list, I dar not pleyne more,
But humbely with sorwful sykes syke;
Yow wryte ich myn unresty sorwes sore,
Fro day to day desyring evermore
To knowen fully, if your wil it were,
How ye han ferd and doon, whyl ye be there.

195. The whos wel-fare and hele eek god encresse
In honour swich, that upward in degree
It growe alwey, so that it never cesse;
Right as your herte ay can, my lady free,
Devyse, I prey to god so mote it be.
And graunte it that ye sone up-on me rewe
As wisly as in al I am yow trewe.

196. And if yow lyketh knowen of the fare
Of me, whos wo ther may no wight discryve,
I can no more but, cheste of every care,
At wrytinge of this lettre I was on-lyve,
Al redy out my woful gost to dryve;
Which I delaye, and holde him yet in honde,
Upon the sight of matere of your sonde.

197. Myn eyen two, in veyn with which I see,
Of sorweful teres salte arn waxen welles;
My song, in pleynte of myn adversitee;
My good, in harm; myn ese eek waxen helle is.
My Ioye, in wo; I can sey yow nought elles,
But turned is, for which my lyf I warie,
Everich Ioye or ese in his contrarie.

198. Which with your cominge hoom ayein to Troye
Ye may redresse, and, more a thousand sythe
Than ever ich hadde, encressen in me Ioye.
For was ther never herte yet so blythe
To han his lyf, as I shal been as swythe
As I yow see; and, though no maner routhe
Commeve yow, yet thinketh on your trouthe.

199. And if so be my gilt hath deeth deserved,
Or if you list no more up-on me see,
In guerdon yet of that I have you served,
Biseche I yow, myn hertes lady free,
That here-upon ye wolden wryte me,
For love of god, my righte lodesterre,
Ther deeth may make an ende of al my werre.

200. If other cause aught doth vow for to dwelle,

That with your lettre ye me re-
comforte;
For though to me your absence is
an helle,
With pacience I wol my wo com-
porte.
And with your lettre of hope I
wol desporte.
Now wryteth, swete, and lat me
thus not pleyne;
With hope, or deeth, delivereth me
fro peyne.

201. Y-wis, myn owene dere herte
trewe,
I woot that, whan ye next up-on
me see,
So lost have I myn hele and eek
myn hewe,
Criseyde shal nought conne knowe
me!
Y-wis, myn hertes day, my lady
free,
So thursteth ay myn herte to bi-
holde
Your beautee, that my lyf unnethe
I holde.

202. I sey no more, al have I for to
seye
To you wel more than I telle
may;
But whether that ye do me live or
deye,
Yet pray I god, so yeve yow right
good day.
And fareth well, goodly fayre
fresshe may,
As ye that lyf or deeth me may
comaunde;
And to your trouthe ay I me re-
comaunde

203. With hele swich that, but ye yeven
me
The same hele, I shal noon hele
have.
In you lyth, whan yow list that it
so be,
The day in which me clothen shal
my grave.
In yow my lyf, in yow might for to
save
Me from disese of alle peynes
smerte;
And fare now wel, myn owene
swete herte!
LE VOSTRE T.'

204. This lettre forth was sent un-to
Criseyde,
Of which hir answere in effect was
this;
Ful pitously she wroot ayein, and
seyde,
That al-so sone as that she might
y-wis,
She wolde come, and mende al
that was mis.
And fynally she wroot and seyde
him thanne,
She wolde come, ye, but she niste
whanne.

205. But in hir lettre made she swich
festes,
That wonder was, and swereth she
loveth him best,
Of which he fond but botmelees
bihestes.
But Troilus, thou mayst now, est
or west,
Pype in an ivy leef, if that thee
lest;
Thus gooth the world; god shilde
us fro mischaunce,
And every wight that meneth
trouthe avaunce!

206. Encresen gan the wo fro day to
night
Of Troilus, for taryinge of Cri-
seyde;
And lessen gan his hope and eek
his might,
For which al doun he in his bed
him leyde;
He ne eet, ne dronk, ne sleep, ne
word he seyde,
Imagininge ay that she was un-
kinde;
For which wel neigh he wex out of
his minde.

207. This dreem, of which I told have
eek biforn,

May never come out of his remembraunce;
He thoughte ay wel he hadde his lady lorn,
And that Ioves, of his purveyaunce,
Him shewed hadde in sleep the signifiaunce
Of hir untrouthe and his disaventure,
And that the boor was shewed him in figure.

208. For which he for Sibille his suster sente,
That called was Cassandre eek al aboute;
And al his dreem he tolde hir er he stente,
And hir bisoughte assoilen him the doute
Of the stronge boor, with tuskes stoute;
And fynally, with-inne a litel stounde,
Cassandre him gan right thus his dreem expounde.

209. She gan first smyle, and seyde, 'O brother dere,
If thou a sooth of this desyrest knowe,
Thou most a fewe of olde stories here,
To purpos, how that fortune overthrowe
Hath lordes olde; through which, with-inne a throwe,
Thou wel this boor shalt knowe, and of what kinde
He comen is, as men in bokes finde.

210. Diane, which that wrooth was and in ire
For Grekes nolde doon hir sacrifyse,
Ne encens up-on hir auter sette a-fyre,
She, for that Grekes gonne hir so dispyse,
Wrak hir in a wonder cruel wyse.
For with a boor as greet as oxe in stalle
She made up frete hir corn and vynes alle.

211. To slee this boor was al the contree reysed,
A-monges which ther com, this boor to see,
A mayde, oon of this world the best y-preysed;
And Meleagre, lord of that contree,
He lovede so this fresshe mayden free
That with his manhod, er he wolde stente,
This boor he slow, and hir the heed he sente;

212. Of which, as olde bokes tellen us,
Ther roos a contek and a greet envye;
And of this lord descended Tydeus
By ligne, or elles olde bokes lye;
But how this Meleagre gan to dye
Thorugh his moder, wol I yow not telle,
For al to long it were for to dwelle.'

[*Argument of the* 12 *Books of* Statius' Thebais.]

Associat profugum Tideo primus *Polimitem;*
Tidea legatum docet insidiasque secundus;
Tercius *Hemoniden canit et vates latitantes;*
Quartus *habet reges ineuntes prelia septem;*
Mox furie Lenne quinto *narratur et anguis;*
Archimori bustum sexto *ludique leguntur;*
Dat Graios Thebes et vatem septimus *vmbris;*
Octauo *cecidit Tideus, spes, vita Pelasgis;*
Ypomedon nono *moritur cum Parthonopeo;*
Fulmine percussus, decimo *Capaneus superatur;*

Vndecimo *sese perimunt per vulnera fratres;*
Argiuam flentem narrat duodenus
et ignem. 12

213. She toldë eek how Tydeus, er she stente,
Un-to the stronge citee of Thebes,
To cleyme kingdom of the citee, wente,
For his felawe, daun Polymites,
Of which the brother, daun Ethyocles,
Ful wrongfully of Thebes held the strengthe;
This tolde she by proces, al by lengthe.

214. She tolde eek how Hemonides asterte,
Whan Tydeus slough fifty knightes stoute.
She told eek al the prophesyes by herte,
And how that sevene kinges, with hir route,
Bisegeden the citee al aboute;
And of the holy serpent, and the welle,
And of the furies, al she gan him telle.

215. Of Archimoris buryinge and the pleyes,
And how Amphiorax fil through the grounde,
How Tydeus was slayn, lord of Argeyes,
And how Ypomedoun in litel stounde
Was dreynt, and deed Parthonope of wounde;
And also how Cappanëus the proude
With thonder-dint was slayn, that cryde loude.

216. She gan eek telle him how that either brother,
Ethyocles and Polimyte also,
At a scarmyche, eche of hem slough other,
And of Argyves wepinge and hir wo;
And how the town was brent she tolde eek tho.
And so descendeth doun from gestes olde
To Diomede, and thus she spak and tolde.

217. 'This ilke boor bitokneth Diomede,
Tydeus sone, that doun descended is
Fro Meleagre, that made the boor to blede.
And thy lady, wher-so she be, y-wis,
This Diomede hir herte hath, and she his.
Weep if thou wolt, or leef; for, out of doute,
This Diomede is inne, and thou art oute.'

218. 'Thou seyst nat sooth,' quod he, 'thou sorceresse,
With al thy false goost of prophesye!
Thou wenest been a greet devyneresse;
Now seestow not this fool of fantasye
Peyneth hir on ladyes for to lye?
Awey,' quod he, 'ther Ioves yeve thee sorwe!
Thou shalt be fals, paraunter, yet to-morwe!

219. As wel thou mightest lyen on Alceste,
That was of creatures, but men lye,
That ever weren, kindest and the beste.
For whanne hir housbonde was in Iupartye
To dye him-self, but-if she wolde dye,
She chees for him to dye and go to helle,
And starf anoon, as us the bokes telle.'

220. Cassandre goth, and he with cruel herte
For-yat his wo, for angre of hir speche;

And from his bed al sodeinly he sterte,
As though al hool him hadde y-mad a leche.
And day by day he gan enquere and seche
A sooth of this, with al his fulle cure;
And thus he dryeth forth his aventure. 1540

221. Fortune, whiche that permutacioun
Of thinges hath, as it is hir committed
Through purveyaunce and disposicioun
Of heighe Iove, as regnes shal ben flitted
Fro folk in folk, or whan they shal ben smitted, 1545
Gan pulle awey the fetheres brighte of Troye
Fro day to day, til they ben bare of Ioye.

222. Among al this, the fyn of the parodie
Of Ector gan approchen wonder blyve;
The fate wolde his soule sholde unbodie, 1550
And shapen hadde a mene it out to dryve;
Ayeins which fate him helpeth not to stryve;
But on a day to fighten gan he wende,
At which, allas! he caughte his lyves ende.

223. For which me thinketh every maner wight 1555
That haunteth armes oughte to biwayle
The deeth of him that was so noble a knight;
For as he drough a king by thaventayle,
Unwar of this, Achilles through the mayle
And through the body gan him for to ryve; 1560
And thus this worthy knight was brought of lyve.

224. For whom, as olde bokes tellen us,
Was mad swich wo, that tonge it may not telle;
And namely, the sorwe of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinesse welle. 1565
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwelle,
That, what for sorwe, and love, and for unreste,
Ful ofte a day he bad his herte breste.

225. But natheles, though he gan him dispeyre,
And dradde ay that his lady was untrewe, 1570
Yet ay on hir his herte gan repeyre.
And as these loveres doon, he soughte ay newe
To gete ayein Criseyde, bright of hewe.
And in his herte he wente hir excusinge,
That Calkas causede al hir taryinge.

226. And ofte tyme he was in purpos grete 1576
Him-selven lyk a pilgrim to disgyse,
To seen hir; but he may not contrefete
To been unknowen of folk that weren wyse,
Ne finde excuse aright that may suffyse, 1580
If he among the Grekes knowen were;
For which he weep ful ofte many a tere.

227. To hir he wroot yet ofte tyme al newe
Ful pitously, he lefte it nought for slouthe,
Biseching hir that, sin that he was trewe, 1585
She wolde come ayein and holde hir trouthe.
For which Criseyde up-on a day, for routhe,

I take it so, touchinge al this matere,
Wrot him ayein, and seyde as ye may here.

228. 'Cupydes sone, ensample of goodlihede,
O swerd of knighthod, sours of gentilesse!
How mighte a wight in torment and in drede
And helelees, yow sende as yet gladnesse?
I hertelees, I syke, I in distresse;
Sin ye with me, nor I with yow may dele,
Yow neither sende ich herte may nor hele.

229. Your lettres ful, the papir al y-pleynted,
Conseyved hath myn hertes piëtee;
I have eek seyn with teres al depeynted
Your lettre, and how that ye requeren me
To come ayein, which yet ne may not be.
But why, lest that this lettre founden were,
No mencioun ne make I now, for fere.

230. Grevous to me, god woot, is your unreste,
Your haste, and that, the goddes ordenaunce,
It semeth not ye take it for the beste.
Nor other thing nis in your remembraunce,
As thinketh me, but only your plesaunce.
But beth not wrooth, and that I yow biseche;
For that I tarie, is al for wikked speche.

231. For I have herd wel more than I wende,
Touchinge us two, how thinges han y-stonde;
Which I shal with dissimulinge amende.
And beth nought wrooth, I have eek understonde,
How ye ne doon but holden me in honde.
But now no fors, I can not in yow gesse
But alle trouthe and alle gentilesse.

232. Comen I wol, but yet in swich disioynte
I stonde as now, that what yeer or what day
That this shal be, that can I not apoynte.
But in effect, I prey yow, as I may,
Of your good word and of your friendship ay.
For trewely, whyle that my lyf may dure,
As for a freend, ye may in me assure.

233. Yet preye I yow on yvel ye ne take,
That it is short which that I to yow wryte;
I dar not, ther I am, wel lettres make,
Ne never yet ne coude I wel endyte.
Eek greet effect men wryte in place lyte.
Thentente is al, and nought the lettres space;
And fareth now wel, god have you in his grace!

La vostre C.'

234. This Troilus this lettre thoughte al straunge,
Whan he it saugh, and sorwefully he sighte;
Him thoughte it lyk a kalendes of chaunge;
But fynally, he ful ne trowen mighte
That she ne wolde him holden that she highte;
For with ful yvel wil list him to leve

That loveth wel, in swich cas, though him greve.

235. But natheles, men seyn that, at the laste,
For any thing, men shal the sothe see;
And swich a cas bitidde, and that as faste,
That Troilus wel understood that she
Nas not so kinde as that hir oughte be.
And fynally, he woot now, out of doute,
That al is lost that he hath been aboute.

236. Stood on a day in his malencolye
This Troilus, and in suspecioun
Of hir for whom he wende for to dye.
And so bifel, that through-out Troye toun,
As was the gyse, y-bore was up and doun
A maner cote-armure, as seyth the storie,
Biforn Deiphebe, in signe of his victorie,

237. The whiche cote, as telleth Lollius,
Deiphebe it hadde y-rent from Diomede
The same day; and whan this Troilus
It saugh, he gan to taken of it hede,
Avysing of the lengthe and of the brede,
And al the werk; but as he gan biholde,
Ful sodeinly his herte gan to colde,

238. As he that on the coler fond with-inne
A broche, that he Criseyde yaf that morwe
That she from Troye moste nedes twinne,
In remembraunce of him and of his sorwe;
And she him leyde ayein hir feyth to borwe
To kepe it ay; but now, ful wel he wiste,
His lady nas no lenger on to triste.

239. He gooth him hoom, and gan ful sone sende
For Pandarus; and al this newe chaunce,
And of this broche, he tolde him word and ende,
Compleyninge of hir hertes variaunce,
His longe love, his trouthe, and his penaunce;
And after deeth, with-outen wordes more,
Ful faste he cryde, his reste him to restore.

240. Than spak he thus, O lady myn Criseyde,
Wher is your feyth, and wher is your biheste?
Wher is your love, wher is your trouthe,' he seyde;
'Of Diomede have ye now al this feste!
Allas, I wolde have trowed at the leste,
That, sin ye nolde in trouthe to me stonde.
That ye thus nolde han holden me in honde!

241. Who shal now trowe on any othes mo?
Allas, I never wolde han wend, er this,
That ye, Criseyde, coude han chaunged so;
Ne, but I hadde a-gilt and doon amis,
So cruel wende I not your herte, y-wis,
To slee me thus; allas, your name of trouthe
Is now for-doon, and that is al my routhe.

242. Was ther non other broche yow liste lete

To feffe with your newe love,' quod he,
'But thilke broche that I, with teres wete,
Yow yaf, as for a remembraunce of me?
Non other cause, allas, ne hadde ye
But for despyt, and eek for that ye mente
Al-outrely to shewen your entente!

243. Through which I see that clene out of your minde
Ye han me cast, and I ne can nor may,
For al this world, with-in myn herte finde
To unloven yow a quarter of a day!
In cursed tyme I born was, weyla-way!
That ye, that doon me al this wo endure,
Yet love I best of any creature.

244. Now god,' quod he, 'me sende yet the grace
That I may meten with this Diomede!
And trewely, if I have might and space,
Yet shal I make, I hope, his sydes blede.
O god,' quod he, 'that oughtest taken hede
To fortheren trouthe, and wronges to punyce,
Why niltow doon a vengeaunce on this vyce?

245. O Pandare, that in dremes for to triste
Me blamed hast, and wont art ofte up-brede,
Now maystow see thy-selve, if that thee liste,
How trewe is now thy nece, bright Criseyde!
In sondry formes, god it woot,' he seyde,
'The goddes shewen bothe Ioye and tene
In slepe, and by my dreme it is now sene.

246. And certaynly, with-oute more speche,
From hennes-forth, as ferforth as I may,
Myn owene deeth in armes wol I seche;
I recche not how sone be the day!
But trewely, Criseyde, swete may,
Whom I have ay with al my might y-served,
That ye thus doon, I have it nought deserved.'

247. This Pandarus, that alle these thinges herde,
And wiste wel he seyde a sooth of this,
He nought a word ayein to him answerde;
For sory of his frendes sorwe he is,
And shamed, for his nece hath doon a-mis;
And stant, astoned of these causes tweye,
As stille as stoon; a word ne coude he seye.

248. But at the laste thus he spak, and seyde,
'My brother dere, I may thee do no-more.
What shulde I seyn? I hate, y-wis, Criseyde!
And god wot, I wol hate hir evermore!
And that thou me bisoughtest doon of yore,
Havinge un-to myn honour ne my reste
Right no reward, I dide al that thee leste.

249. If I dide ought that mighte lyken thee,
It is me leef; and of this treson now,
God woot, that it a sorwe is un-to me!
And dredelees, for hertes ese of yow,
Right fayn wolde I amende it, wiste I how.

And fro this world, almighty god I preye,
Delivere hir sone; I can no-more seye.'

250. Gret was the sorwe and pleynt of Troilus;
But forth hir cours fortune ay gan to holde.
Criseyde loveth the sone of Tydeus,
And Troilus mot wepe in cares colde.
Swich is this world; who-so it can biholde,
In eche estat is litel hertes reste;
God leve us for to take it for the beste!

251. In many cruel batayle, out of drede,
Of Troilus, this ilke noble knight,
As men may in these olde bokes rede,
Was sene his knighthod and his grete might.
And dredelees, his ire, day and night,
Ful cruelly the Grekes ay aboughte;
And alwey most this Diomede he soughte.

252. And ofte tyme, I finde that they mette
With blody strokes and with wordes grete,
Assayinge how hir speres weren whette;
And god it woot, with many a cruel hete
Gan Troilus upon his helm to-bete.
But natheles, fortune it nought ne wolde,
Of otheres hond that either deyen sholde. —

253. And if I hadde y-taken for to wryte
The armes of this ilke worthy man,
Than wolde I of his batailles endyte.
But for that I to wryte first bigan
Of his love, I have seyd as that I can.
His worthy dedes, who-so list hem here,
Reed Dares, he can telle hem alle y-fere.

254. Bisechinge every lady bright of hewe,
And every gentil womman, what she be,
That al be that Criseyde was untrewe,
That for that gilt she be not wrooth with me.
Ye may hir gilt in othere bokes see;
And gladlier I wol wryten, if yow leste,
Penelopeës trouthe and good Alceste.

255. Ne I sey not this al-only for these men,
But most for wommen that bitraysed be
Through false folk; god yeve hem sorwe, amen!
That with hir grete wit and subtiltee
Bitrayse yow! and this commeveth me
To speke, and in effect yow alle I preye,
Beth war of men, and herkeneth what I seye! —

256. Go, litel book, go litel myn tragedie,
Ther god thy maker yet, er that he dye,
So sende might to make in som comedie!
But litel book, no making thou nenvye,
But subgit be to alle poesye;
And kis the steppes, wher-as thou seest pace
Virgile, Ovyde, Omer, Lucan, and Stace.

257. And for ther is so greet diversitee
In English and in wryting of our tonge,
So preye I god that noon miswryte thee,
Ne thee mismetre for defaute of tonge.

And red wher-so thou be, or elles songe,
That thou be understonde I god beseche!
But yet to purpos of my rather speche. —

258. The wraththe, as I began yow for to seye,
Of Troilus, the Grekes boughten dere;
For thousandes his hondes maden deye,
As he that was with-outen any pere,
Save Ector, in his tyme, as I can here.
But weylaway, save only goddes wille,
Dispitously him slough the fiers Achille.

259. And whan that he was slayn in this manere,
His lighte goost ful blisfully is went
Up to the holownesse of the seventh spere,
In convers letinge every element;
And ther he saugh, with ful avysement,
The erratik sterres, herkeninge armonye
With sownes fulle of hevenish melodye.

260. And doun from thennes faste he gan avyse
This litel spot of erthe, that with the see
Enbraced is, and fully gan despyse
This wrecched world, and held al vanitee
To respect of the pleyn felicitee
That is in hevene above; and at the laste,
Ther he was slayn, his loking doun he caste;

261. And in him-self he lough right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his deeth so faste;
And dampned al our werk that followeth so
The blinde lust, the which that may not laste,
And sholden al our herte on hevene caste.
And forth he wente, shortly for to telle,
Ther as Mercurie sorted him to dwelle. —

262. Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for love,
Swich fyn hath al his grete worthinesse;
Swich fyn hath his estat real above,
Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath his noblesse;
Swich fyn hath false worldes brotelnesse.
And thus bigan his lovinge of Criseyde,
As I have told, and in this wyse he deyde.

263. O yonge fresshe folkes, he or she,
In which that love up groweth with your age,
Repeyreth hoom from worldly vanitee,
And of your herte up-casteth the visage
To thilke god that after his image
Yow made, and thinketh al nis but a fayre
This world, that passeth sone as floures fayre.

264. And loveth him, the which that right for love
Upon a cros, our soules for to beye,
First starf, and roos, and sit in hevene a-bove;
For he nil falsen no wight, dar I seye,
That wol his herte al hoolly on him leye.
And sin he best to love is, and most meke,
What nedeth feyned loves for to seke?

265. Lo here, of Payens corsed olde rytes,
Lo here, what alle hir goddes may availle;
Lo here, these wrecched worldes appetytes;
Lo here, the fyn and guerdon for travaille
Of Iove, Appollo, of Mars, of swich rascaille!
Lo here, the forme of olde clerkes speche
In poetrye, if ye hir bokes seche. —

266. O moral Gower, this book I directe
To thee, and to the philosophical Strode,
To vouchen sauf, ther nede is, to corecte,
Of your benignitees and zeles gode.
And to that sothfast Crist, that starf on rode,
With al myn herte of mercy ever I preye;
And to the lord right thus I speke and seye:

267. Thou oon, and two, and three, eterne on-lyve,
That regnest ay in three and two and oon,
Uncircumscript, and al mayst circumscryve,
Us from visible and invisible foon
Defende; and to thy mercy, everichoon,
So make us, Iesus, for thy grace digne,
For love of mayde and moder thyn benigne! Amen.

Explicit Liber Troili et Criseydis.

THE HOUS OF FAME.

BOOK I.

God turne us every dreem to gode!
For hit is wonder, by the rode,
To my wit, what causeth swevenes
Either on morwes, or on evenes;
And why theffect folweth of somme,
And of somme hit shal never come;
Why that is an avisioun,
And this a revelacioun;
Why this a dreem, why that a sweven,
And nat to every man liche even;
Why this a fantom, these oracles,
I noot; but who-so of these miracles
The causes knoweth bet than I,
Devyne he; for I certeinly
Ne can hem noght, ne never thinke
To besily my wit to swinke,
To knowe of hir signifiaunce
The gendres, neither the distaunce
Of tymes of hem, ne the causes
For-why this more than that cause is;
As if folkes complexiouns
Make hem dreme of reflexiouns;
Or elles thus, as other sayn,
For to greet feblenesse of brayn,
By abstinence, or by seeknesse,
Prison, stewe, or greet distresse;
Or elles by disordinaunce
Of naturel acustomaunce,
That som man is to curious
In studie, or melancolious,
Or thus, so inly ful of drede,
That no man may him bote bede;
Or elles, that devocioun
Of somme, and contemplacioun
Causeth swiche dremes ofte;
Or that the cruel lyf unsofte
Which these ilke lovers leden
That hopen over muche or dreden,
That purely hir impressiouns
Causeth hem avisiouns;
Or if that spirits have the might
To make folk to dreme a-night
Or if the soule, of propre kinde,
Be so parfit, as men finde,
That hit forwot that is to come,
And that hit warneth alle and somme
Of everiche of hir aventures
By avisiouns, or by figures,
But that our flesh ne hath no might
To understonden hit aright,
For hit is warned to derkly; —
But why the cause is, noght wot I.
Wel worthe, of this thing, grete clerkes,
That trete of this and other werkes;
For I of noon opinioun
Nil as now make mencioun,
But only that the holy rode
Turne us every dreem to gode!
For never, sith that I was born,
Ne no man elles, me biforn,
Mette, I trowe stedfastly,
So wonderful a dreem as I
The tenthe day [dide] of Decembre,
The which, as I can now remembre,
I wol yow tellen every del.

The Invocation.

But at my ginning, trusteth wel,
I wol make invocacioun,
With special devocioun,
Unto the god of slepe anoon,
That dwelleth in a cave of stoon
Upon a streem that comth fro Lete,
That is a flood of helle unswete;
Besyde a folk men clepe Cimerie,
Ther slepeth ay this god unmerie
With his slepy thousand sones
That alway for to slepe hir wone is —
And to this god, that I of rede,

Preye I, that he wol me spede
My sweven for to telle aright,
If every dreem stonde in his might.
And he, that mover is of al
That is and was, and ever shal,
So yive hem Ioye that hit here
Of alle that they dreme to-yere,
And for to stonden alle in grace
Of hir loves, or in what place
That hem wer levest for to stonde,
And shelde hem fro povert and shonde,
And fro unhappe and ech disese,
And sende hem al that may hem plese,
That take hit wel, and scorne hit noght,
Ne hit misdemen in her thoght
Through malicious entencioun.
And who-so, through presumpcioun,
Or hate or scorne, or through envye,
Dispyt, or Iape, or vilanye,
Misdeme hit, preye I Iesus god
That (dreme he barfoot, dreme he shod),
That every harm that any man
Hath had, sith [that] the world began,
Befalle him therof, or he sterve,
And graunte he mote hit ful deserve,
Lo! with swich a conclusioun
As had of his avisioun
Cresus, that was king of Lyde,
That high upon a gebet dyde!
This prayer shal he have of me;
I am no bet in charite!
Now herkneth, as I have you seyd,
What that I mette, or I abreyd.

The Dream.

Of Decembre the tenthe day,
Whan hit was night, to slepe I lay
Right ther as I was wont to done,
And fil on slepe wonder sone,
As he that wery was for-go
On pilgrimage myles two
To the corseynt Leonard,
To make lythe of that was hard.
But as I sleep, me mette I was
Within a temple y-mad of glas;
In whiche ther were mo images
Of gold, stondinge in sondry stages,
And mo riche tabernacles,
And with perre mo pinacles,
And mo curious portreytures,
And queynte maner of figures
Of olde werke, then I saw ever.
For certeynly, I niste never
Wher that I was, but wel wiste I,
Hit was of Venus redely,
The temple; for, in portreyture,
I saw anoon-right hir figure
Naked fletinge in a see.
And also on hir heed, parde,
Hir rose-garlond whyt and reed,
And hir comb to kembe hir heed,
Hir dowves, and daun Cupido,
Hir blinde sone, and Vulcano,
That in his face was ful broun.
But as I romed up and doun,
I fond that on a wal ther was
Thus writen, on a table of bras:
'I wol now singe, if that I can,
The armes, and al-so the man,
That first cam, through his destinee,
Fugitif of Troye contree,
In Itaile, with ful moche pyne,
Unto the strondes of Lavyne.'
And tho began the story anoon,
As I shal telle yow echoon.
First saw I the destruccioun
Of Troye, through the Greek Sinoun,
[That] with his false forsweringe,
And his chere and his lesinge
Made the hors broght into Troye,
Thorgh which Troyens loste al hir Ioye.
And after this was grave, allas!
How Ilioun assailed was
And wonne, and king Priam y-slayn,
And Polites his sone, certayn,
Dispitously, of dan Pirrus.
And next that saw I how Venus,
Whan that she saw the castel brende,
Doun fro the hevene gan descende,
And bad hir sone Eneas flee;
And how he fledde, and how that he
Escaped was from al the pres,
And took his fader, Anchises,
And bar him on his bakke away,
Cryinge, 'Allas, and welaway!'
The whiche Anchises in his honde
Bar the goddes of the londe,
Thilke that unbrende were.
And I saw next, in alle this fere,
How Creusa, daun Eneas wyf,
Which that he lovede as his lyf,
And hir yonge sone Iulo,
And eek Ascanius also,
Fledden eek with drery chere,
That hit was pitee for to here;

And in a forest, as they wente,
At a turninge of a wente,
How Creusa was y-lost, allas!
That deed, [but] noot I how, she was;
How he hir soughte, and how hir gost
Bad him to flee the Grekes ost,
And seyde, he moste unto Itaile,
As was his destinee, sauns faille;
That hit was pitee for to here,
Whan hir spirit gan appere,
The wordes that she to him seyde,
And for to kepe hir sone him preyde.
Ther saw I graven eek how he,
His fader eek, and his meynee,
With his shippes gan to sayle
Toward the contree of Itaile,
As streight as that they mighte go.
Ther saw I thee, cruel Iuno,
That art daun Iupiteres wyf,
That hast y-hated, al thy lyf,
Al the Troyanisshe blood,
Renne and crye, as thou were wood,
On Eolus, the god of windes,
To blowen out, of alle kindes,
So loude, that he shulde drenche
Lord and lady, grome and wenche
Of al the Troyan nacioun,
Withoute any savacioun.
Ther saw I swich tempeste aryse,
That every herte mighte agryse,
To see hit peynted on the walle.
Ther saw I graven eek withalle,
Venus, how ye, my lady dere,
Wepinge with ful woful chere,
Prayen Iupiter an hye
To save and kepe that navye
Of the Troyan Eneas,
Sith that he hir sone was.
Ther saw I Ioves Venus kisse,
And graunted of the tempest lisse.
Ther saw I how the tempest stente,
And how with alle pyne he wente,
And prevely took arrivage
In the contree of Cartage;
And on the morwe, how that he
And a knight, hight Achatee,
Metten with Venus that day,
Goinge in a queynt array,
As she had ben an hunteresse,
With wind blowinge upon hir tresse;
How Eneas gan him to pleyne,
Whan that he knew hir, of his peyne;
And how his shippes dreynte were
Or elles lost, he niste where;
How she gan him comforte tho,
And bad him to Cartage go,
And ther he shuldë his folk finde,
That in the see were left behinde.
And, shortly of this thing to pace,
She made Eneas so in grace
Of Dido, quene of that contree,
That, shortly for to tellen, she
Becam his love, and leet him do
That that wedding longeth to.
What shulde I speke more queynte,
Or peyne me my wordes peynte,
To speke of love? hit wol not be;
I can not of that facultee.
And eek to telle the manere
How they aqueynteden in-fere,
Hit were a long proces to telle,
And over long for yow to dwelle.
Ther saw I grave, how Eneas
Tolde Dido every cas,
That him was tid upon the see.
And after grave was, how she
Made of him, shortly, at oo word,
Hir lyf, hir love, hir lust, hir lord;
And dide him al the reverence,
And leyde on him al the dispence,
That any woman mighte do,
Weninge hit had al be so,
As he hir swoor; and her-by demed
That he was good, for he swich semed.
Allas! what harm doth apparence,
Whan hit is fals in existence!
For he to hir a traitour was;
Wherfor she slow hir-self, allas!
Lo, how a woman doth amis,
To love him that unknowen is!
For, by Crist, lo! thus hit fareth;
'Hit is not al gold, that glareth.'
For, al-so brouke I wel myn heed,
Ther may be under goodliheed
Kevered many a shrewed vyce;
Therfor be no wight so nyce,
To take a love only for chere,
For speche, or for frendly manere;
For this shal every woman finde
That som man, of his pure kinde,
Wol shewen outward the faireste,
Til he have caught that what him leste;
And thanne wol he causes finde,
And swere how that she is unkinde,
Or fals, or prevy, or double was.

Al this seye I by Eneas
And Dido, and hir nyce lest,
That lovede al to sone a gest;
Therfor I wol seye a proverbe,
That 'he that fully knoweth therbe
May saufly leye hit to his yë';
Withoute dreed, this is no lye.
But let us speke of Eneas,
How he betrayed hir, allas!
And lefte hir ful unkindely.
So whan she saw al-utterly,
That he wolde hir of trouthe faile,
And wende fro hir to Itaile,
She gan to wringe hir hondes two.
'Allas!' quod she, 'what me is wo!
Allas! is every man thus trewe,
That every yere wolde have a newe,
If hit so longe tyme dure,
Or elles three, peraventure?
As thus: of oon he wolde have fame
In magnifying of his name;
Another for frendship, seith he;
And yet ther shal the thridde be,
That shal be taken for delyt
Lo, or for singular profyt.'
In swiche wordes gan to pleyne
Dido of hir grete peyne,
As me mette redely;
Non other auctour alegge I.
'Allas!' quod she, 'my swete herte,
Have pitee on my sorwes smerte,
And slee me not! go noght away!
O woful Dido, wel away!'
Quod she to hir-selve tho.
'O Eneas! what wil ye do?
O, that your love, ne your bonde,
That ye han sworn with your right honde,
Ne my cruel deeth,' quod she,
'May holde yow still heer with me!
O, haveth of my deeth pitee!
Y-wis, my dere herte, ye
Knowen ful wel that never yit,
As fer-forth as I hadde wit,
Agilte [I] yow in thoght ne deed.
O, have ye men swich goodliheed
In speche, and never a deel of trouthe?
Allas, that ever hadde routhe
Any woman on any man!
Now see I wel, and telle can,
We wrecched wimmen conne non art;
For certeyn, for the more part,
Thus we be served everichone.
How sore that ye men conne grone,
Anoon as we have yow receyved!
Certeinly we ben deceyved;
For, though your love laste a sesoun,
Wayte upon the conclusioun,
And eek how that ye determynen,
And for the more part diffynen.
'O, welawey that I was born!
For through yow is my name lorn,
And alle myn actes red and songe
Over al this lond, on every tonge.
O wikke Fame! for ther nis
Nothing so swift, lo, as she is!
O, sooth is, every thing is wist,
Though hit be kevered with the mist.
Eek, thogh I mighte duren ever,
That I have doon, rekever I never,
That I ne shal be seyd, allas,
Y-shamed be through Eneas,
And that I shal thus Iuged be—
"Lo, right as she hath doon, now she
Wol do eftsones, hardily;"
Thus seyth the peple prevely.'—
But that is doon, nis not to done;
Al hir compleynt ne al hir mone,
Certeyn, availeth hir not a stre.
And whan she wiste sothly he
Was forth unto his shippes goon,
She in hir chambre wente anoon,
And called on hir suster Anne,
And gan hir to compleyne thanne;
And seyde, that she cause was
That she first lovede [Eneas],
And thus counseilled hir therto.
But what! when this was seyd and do,
She roof hir-selve to the herte,
And deyde through the wounde smerte.
But al the maner how she deyde,
And al the wordes that she seyde,
Who-so to knowe hit hath purpos,
Reed Virgile in Eneidos
Or the Epistle of Ovyde,
What that she wroot or that she dyde;
And nere hit to long to endyte,
By god, I wolde hit here wryte.
But, welaway! the harm, the routhe,
That hath betid for swich untrouthe,
As men may ofte in bokes rede,
And al day seen hit yet in dede,
That for to thenken hit, a tene is.
Lo, Demophon, duk of Athenis,
How he forswor him ful falsly,
And trayed Phillis wikkedly,
That kinges doghter was of Trace,

And falsly gan his terme pace;
And when she wiste that he was fals,
She heng hir-self right by the hals,
For he had do hir swich untrouthe;
Lo! was not this a wo and routhe?
Eek lo! how fals and reccheles
Was to Briseida Achilles,
And Paris to Oënone;
And Iason to Isiphile;
And eft Iason to Medea;
And Ercules to Dyanira;
For he lefte hir for Iöle,
That made him cacche his deeth, parde.
How fals eek was he, Theseus;
That, as the story telleth us,
How he betrayed Adriane;
The devel be his soules bane!
For had he laughed, had he loured,
He mostë have be al devoured,
If Adriane ne had y-be!
And, for she had of him pitee,
She made him fro the dethe escape,
And he made hir a ful fals Iape;
For after this, within a whyle
He lefte hir slepinge in an yle,
Deserte alone, right in the see,
And stal away, and leet hir be;
And took hir suster Phedra tho
With him, and gan to shippe go.
And yet he had y-sworn to here,
On al that ever he mighte swere,
That, so she saved him his lyf,
He wolde have take hir to his wyf;
For she desired nothing elles,
In certein, as the book us telles.
But to excusen Eneas
Fulliche of al his greet trespas,
The book seyth, Mercurie, sauns faile,
Bad him go into Itaile,
And leve Auffrykes regioun,
And Dido and hir faire toun.
Tho saw I grave, how to Itaile
Daun Eneas is go to saile;
And how the tempest al began,
And how he loste his steresman,
Which that the stere, or he took keep,
Smot over-bord, lo! as he sleep.
And also saw I how Sibyle
And Eneas, besyde an yle,
To helle wente, for to see
His fader, Anchises the free.
How he ther fond Palinurus,
And Dido, and eek Deiphebus;
And every tourment eek in helle
Saw he, which is long to telle.
Which who-so willeth for to knowe,
He moste rede many a rowe
On Virgile or on Claudian,
Or Daunte, that hit telle can.
Tho saw I grave al tharivaile
That Eneas had in Itaile;
And with king Latine his tretee,
And alle the batailles that he
Was at him-self, and eek his knightes
Or he had al y-wonne his rightes;
And how he Turnus refte his lyf,
And wan Lavyna to his wyf;
And al the mervelous signals
Of the goddes celestials;
How, maugre Iuno, Eneas,
For al hir slighte and hir compas,
Acheved al his aventure;
For Iupiter took of him cure
At the prayere of Venus;
The whiche I preye alway save us,
And us ay of our sorwes lighte!
Whan I had seyen al this sighte
In this noble temple thus,
'A, Lord!' thoughte I, 'that madest us,
Yet saw I never swich noblesse
Of images, ne swich richesse,
As I saw graven in this chirche;
But not woot I who dide hem wirche,
Ne wher I am, ne in what contree.
But now wol I go out and see,
Right at the wiket, if I can
See o-wher stering any man,
That may me telle wher I am.'
When I out at the dores cam,
I faste aboute me beheld.
Then saw I but a large feld,
As fer as that I mighte see,
Withouten toun, or hous, or tree,
Or bush, or gras, or ered lond;
For al the feld nas but of sond
As smal as man may see yet lye
In the desert of Libye;
Ne I no maner creature,
That is y-formed by nature,
Ne saw, me [for] to rede or wisse.
'O Crist,' thoughte I, 'that art in blisse,
Fro fantom and illusioun
Me save!' and with devocioun
Myn yën to the heven I caste.
Tho was I war, lo! at the laste,

That faste by the sonne, as hyë
As kenne mighte I with myn yë,
Me thoughte I saw an egle sore,
But that hit semed moche more
Then I had any egle seyn.
But this as sooth as deeth, certeyn,
Hit was of golde, and shoon so brighte,
That never saw men such a sighte,
But-if the heven hadde y-wonne
Al newe of golde another sonne;
So shoon the egles fethres brighte,
And somwhat dounward gan hit lighte.

Explicit liber primus.

BOOK II.

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

Proem.

Now herkneth, every maner man
That English understonde can,
And listeth of my dreem to lere;
For now at erste shul ye here
So selly an avisioun,
That Isaye, ne Scipioun,
Ne king Nabugodonosor,
Pharo, Turnus, ne Elcanor,
Ne mette swich a dreem as this!
Now faire blisful, O Cipris,
So be my favour at this tyme!
And ye, me to endyte and ryme
Helpeth, that on Parnaso dwelle
By Elicon the clere welle.
O Thought, that wroot al that I mette,
And in the tresorie hit shette
Of my brayn! now shal men see
If any vertu in thee be,
To tellen al my dreem aright;
Now kythe thyn engyn and might!

THE DREAM.

This egle, of which I have yow told,
That shoon with fethres as of gold,
Which that so hyë gan to sore,
I gan beholde more and more,
To see hir beautee and the wonder;
But never was ther dint of thonder,
Ne that thing that men calle foudre,
That smoot somtyme a tour to poudre,
And in his swifte coming brende,
That so swythe gan descende,
As this foul, whan hit behelde
That I a-roume was in the felde;
And with his grimme pawes stronge,
Within his sharpe nayles longe,
Me, fleinge, at a swappe he hente,
And with his sours agayn up wente,
Me caryinge in his clawes starke
As lightly as I were a larke,
How high, I can not telle yow,
For I cam up, I niste how.
For so astonied and a-sweved
Was every vertu in my heved,
What with his sours and with my drede,
That al my feling gan to dede;
For-why hit was to greet affray.
Thus I longe in his clawes lay,
Til at the laste he to me spak
In mannes vois, and seyde, 'Awak!
And be not so a-gast, for shame!'
And called me tho by my name.
And, for I sholde the bet abreyde—
Me mette—'Awak,' to me he seyde,
Right in the same vois and stevene
That useth oon I coude nevene;
And with that vois, soth for to sayn,
My minde cam to me agayn;
For hit was goodly seyd to me,
So nas hit never wont to be.
And herwithal I gan to stere,
And he me in his feet to bere,
Til that he felte that I had hete,
And felte eek tho myn herte bete.
And tho gan he me to disporte,
And with wordes to comforte,
And sayde twyës, 'Seynte Marie!
Thou art noyous for to carie,
And nothing nedeth hit, parde!
For al-so wis god helpe me
As thou non harm shalt have of this;
And this cas, that betid thee is,
Is for thy lore and for thy prow;—
Let see! darst thou yet loke now?
Be ful assured, boldely,
I am thy frend.' And therwith I
Gan for to wondren in my minde.

'O god,' thoughte I, 'that madest kinde,
Shal I non other weyes dye?
Wher Ioves wol me stellifye,
Or what thing may this signifye?
I neither am Enok, ne Elye,
Ne Romulus, ne Ganymede
That was y-bore up, as men rede,
To hevene with dan Iupiter,
And maad the goddes boteler.'
Lo! this was tho my fantasye!
But he that bar me gan espye
That I so thoghte, and seyde this:—
'Thou demest of thy-self amis;
For Ioves is not ther-aboute—
I dar wel putte thee out of doute—
To make of thee as yet a sterre.
But er I bere thee moche ferre,
I wol thee telle what I am,
And whider thou shalt, and why I cam
To done this, so that thou take
Good herte, and not for fere quake.'
'Gladly,' quod I. 'Now wel,' quod he:—
'First I, that in my feet have thee,
Of which thou hast a feer and wonder,
Am dwelling with the god of thonder,
Which that men callen Iupiter,
That dooth me flee ful ofte fer
To do al his comaundement.
And for this cause he hath me sent
To thee: now herke, by thy trouthe!
Certeyn, he hath of thee routhe,
That thou so longe trewely
Hast served so ententifly
His blinde nevew Cupido,
And fair Venus [goddesse] also,
Withoute guerdoun ever yit,
And nevertheles hast set thy wit—
Although that in thy hede ful lyte is—
To make bokes, songes, dytees,
In ryme, or elles in cadence,
As thou best canst, in reverence
Of Love, and of his servants eke,
That have his servise soght, and seke;
And peynest thee to preyse his art,
Althogh thou haddest never part;
Wherfor, al-so god me blesse,
Ioves halt hit greet humblesse
And vertu eek, that thou wolt make
A-night ful ofte thyn heed to ake,
In thy studie so thou wrytest,
And ever-mo of love endytest,
In honour of him and preysinges,
And in his folkes furtheringes,
And in hir matere al devysest,
And noght him nor his folk despysest,
Although thou mayst go in the daunce
Of hem that him list not avaunce.
'Wherfor, as I seyde, y-wis,
Iupiter considereth this,
And also, beau sir, other thinges;
That is, that thou hast no tydinges
Of Loves folk, if they be glade,
Ne of noght elles that god made;
And noght only fro fer contree
That ther no tyding comth to thee,
But of thy verray neyghebores,
That dwellen almost at thy dores,
Thou herest neither that ne this;
For whan thy labour doon al is,
And hast y-maad thy rekeninges,
In stede of reste and newe thinges,
Thou gost hoom to thy hous anoon;
And, also domb as any stoon,
Thou sittest at another boke,
Til fully daswed is thy loke,
And livest thus as an hermyte,
Although thyn abstinence is lyte.
'And therfor Ioves, through his grace,
Wol that I bere thee to a place,
Which that hight THE HOUS OF FAME,
To do thee som disport and game,
In som recompensacioun
Of labour and devocioun
That thou hast had, lo! causeles,
To Cupido, the reccheles!
And thus this god, thorgh his meryte,
Wol with som maner thing thee quyte,
So that thou wolt be of good chere.
For truste wel, that thou shalt here,
When we be comen ther I seye,
Mo wonder thinges, dar I leye,
Of Loves folke mo tydinges,
Bothe soth-sawes and lesinges;
And mo loves newe begonne,
And longe y-served loves wonne,
And mo loves casuelly
That been betid, no man wot why,
But as a blind man stert an hare;
And more Iolytee and fare,
Whyl that they finde love of stele,
As thinketh hem, and over-al wele;
Mo discords, and mo Ielousyes,
Mo murmurs, and mo novelryes,
And mo dissimulaciouns,
And feyned reparaciouns;

And mo berdes in two houres
Withoute rasour or sisoures
Y-maad, then greynes be of sondes;
And eke mo holdinge in hondes,
And also mo renovelaunces
Of olde forleten aqueyntaunces;
Mo love-dayes and acordes
Then on instruments ben cordes;
And eke of loves mo eschaunges
Than ever cornes were in graunges;
Unethe maistow trowen this?'—
Quod he. 'No, helpe me god so wis!'—
Quod I. 'No? why?' quod he. 'For hit
Were impossible, to my wit,
Though that Fame hadde al the pyes
In al a realme, and al the spyes,
How that yet she shulde here al this,
Or they espye hit.' 'O yis, yis!'
Quod he to me, 'that can I preve
By resoun, worthy for to leve,
So that thou yeve thyn advertence
To understonde my sentence.
'First shalt thou heren wher she dwelleth,
And so thyn owne book hit telleth;
Hir paleys stant, as I shal seye,
Right even in middes of the weye
Betwixen hevene, erthe, and see;
That, what-so-ever in al these three
Is spoken, in privee or aperte,
The wey therto is so overte,
And stant eek in so luste a place,
That every soun mot to hit pace,
Or what so comth fro any tonge,
Be hit rouned, red, or songe,
Or spoke in seurtee or drede,
Certein, hit moste thider nede.
'Now herkne wel; for-why I wille
Tellen thee a propre skile,
And worthy demonstracioun
In myn imagynacioun.
'Geffrey, thou wost right wel this,
That every kindly thing that is,
Hath a kindly stede ther he
May best in hit conserved be;
Unto which place every thing,
Through his kindly enclyning,
Moveth for to come to,
Whan that hit is awey therfro;
As thus; lo, thou mayst al day see
That any thing that hevy be,
As stoon or leed, or thing of wighte,
And ber hit never so hye on highte,
Lat go thyn hand, hit falleth doun.
'Right so seye I by fyre or soun,
Or smoke, or other thinges lighte,
Alwey they seke upward on highte;
Whyl ech of hem is at his large,
Light thing up, and dounward charge.
'And for this cause mayst thou see,
That every river to the see
Enclyned is to go, by kinde.
And by these skilles, as I finde,
Hath fish dwellinge in floode and see,
And treës eek in erthe be.
Thus every thing, by this resoun,
Hath his propre mansioun,
To which hit seketh to repaire,
As ther hit shulde not apaire.
Lo, this sentence is knowen couthe
Of every philosophres mouthe,
As Aristotle and dan Platon,
And other clerkes many oon;
And to confirme my resoun,
Thou wost wel this, that speche is soun,
Or elles no man mighte hit here;
Now herkne what I wol thee lere.
'Soun is noght but air y-broken,
And every speche that is spoken,
Loud or privee, foul or fair,
In his substaunce is but air;
For as flaumbe is but lighted smoke,
Right so soun is air y-broke.
But this may be in many wyse,
Of which I wil thee two devyse,
As soun that comth of pype or harpe.
For whan a pype is blowen sharpe,
The air is twist with violence,
And rent; lo, this is my sentence;
Eek, whan men harpe-stringes smyte,
Whether hit be moche or lyte,
Lo, with the strook the air to-breketh;
Right so hit breketh whan men speketh.
Thus wost thou wel what thing is speche.
'Now hennesforth I wol thee teche,
How every speche, or noise, or soun,
Throgh his multiplicacioun,
Though hit were pyped of a mouse,
Moot nede come to Fames House.
I preve hit thus—tak hede now—
By experience; for if that thou
Throwe on water now a stoon,
Wel wost thou, hit wol make anoon
A litel roundel as a cercle,
Paraventure brood as a covercle;

And right anoon thou shalt see weel,
That wheel wol cause another wheel,
And that the thridde, and so forth, brother,
Every cercle causing other,
Wyder than himselve was;
And thus, fro roundel to compas,
Ech aboute other goinge,
Caused of othres steringe,
And multiplying ever-mo,
Til that hit be so fer y-go
That hit at bothe brinkes be.
Al-thogh thou mowe hit not y-see
Above, hit goth yet alway under,
Although thou thenke hit a gret wonder.
And who-so seith of trouthe I varie,
Bid him proven the contrarie.
And right thus every word, y-wis,
That loude or privee spoken is,
Moveth first an air aboute,
And of this moving, out of doute,
Another air anoon is meved,
As I have of the water preved,
That every cercle causeth other.
Right so of air, my leve brother;
Everich air in other stereth
More and more, and speche up bereth,
Or vois, or noise, or word, or soun,
Ay through multiplicacioun,
Til hit be atte House of Fame; —
Tak hit in ernest or in game.
'Now have I told, if thou have minde,
How speche or soun, of pure kinde,
Enclyned is upward to meve;
This, mayst thou fele, wel I preve.
And that [the mansioun], y-wis,
That every thing enclyned to is.
Hath his kindeliche stede:
That sheweth hit, withouten drede,
That kindely the mansioun
Of every speche, of every soun,
Be hit either foul or fair,
Hath his kinde place in air.
And sin that every thing, that is
Out of his kinde place, y-wis,
Moveth thider for to go
If hit a-weye be therfro,
As I before have preved thee,
Hit seweth, every soun, pardee,
Moveth kindely to pace
Al up into his kindely place.
And this place of which I telle,
Ther as Fame list to dwelle,
Is set amiddes of these three,
Heven, erthe, and eek the see,
As most conservatif the soun.
Than is this the conclusioun,
That every speche of every man,
As I thee telle first began,
Moveth up on high to pace
Kindely to Fames place.
'Telle me this feithfully,
Have I not preved thus simply,
Withouten any subtiltee
Of speche, or gret prolixitee
Of termes of philosophye,
Of figures of poetrye,
Or colours of rethoryke?
Pardee, hit oghte thee to lyke;
For hard langage and hard matere
Is encombrous for to here
At ones; wost thou not wel this?'
And I answerede, and seyde, 'Yis.'
'A ha!' quod he, 'lo, so I can
Lewedly to a lewed man
Speke, and shewe him swiche skiles,
That he may shake hem by the biles,
So palpable they shulden be.
But tel me this, now pray I thee,
How thinkth thee my conclusioun?'
[Quod he]. 'A good persuasioun,'
Quod I, 'hit is; and lyk to be
Right so as thou hast preved me.'
'By god,' quod he, 'and as I leve,
Thou shalt have yit, or hit be eve,
Of every word of this sentence
A preve, by experience;
And with thyn eres heren wel
Top and tail, and everydel,
That every word that spoken is
Comth into Fames Hous, y-wis,
As I have seyd; what wilt thou more?'
And with this word upper to sore
He gan, and seyde, 'By Seynt Iame!
Now wil we speken al of game.' —
'How farest thou?' quod he to me.
'Wel,' quod I. 'Now see,' quod he,
'By thy trouthe, yond adoun,
Wher that thou knowest any toun,
Or hous, or any other thing.
And whan thou hast of ought knowing,
Loke that thou warne me,
And I anoon shal telle thee
How fer that thou art now therfro.'
And I adoun gan loken tho,
And beheld feldes and plaines,

And now hilles, and now mountaines,
Now valeys, and now forestes,
And now, unethes, grete bestes;
Now riveres, now citees,
Now tounes, and now grete trees,
Now shippes sailing in the see.
But thus sone in a whyle he
Was flowen fro the grounde so hyë.
That al the world, as to myn yë,
No more semed than a prikke;
Or elles was the air so thikke
That I ne mighte not discerne.
With that he spak to me as yerne,
And seyde: 'Seestow any [toun]
Or ought thou knowest yonder doun?
I seyde, 'Nay.' 'No wonder nis,'
Quod he, 'for half so high as this
Nas Alexander Macedo;
Ne the king, dan Scipio,
That saw in dreme, at point devys,
Helle and erthe, and paradys;
Ne eek the wrecche Dedalus,
Ne his child, nyce Icarus,
That fleigh so highe that the hete
His winges malt, and he fel wete
In-mid the see, and ther he dreynte,
For whom was maked moch compleynte.
'Now turn upward,' quod he, 'thy face,
And behold this large place,
This air; but loke thou ne be
Adrad of hem that thou shalt see;
For in this regioun, certein,
Dwelleth many a citezein,
Of which that speketh dan Plato.
These ben the eyrish bestes, lo!'
And so saw I al that meynee
Bothe goon and also flee.
'Now,' quod he tho, 'cast up thyn yë;
See yonder, lo, the Galaxyë,
Which men clepeth the Milky Wey,
For hit is whyt: and somme, parfey,
Callen hit Watlinge Strete:
That ones was y-brent with hete,
Whan the sonnes sone, the rede,
That highte Pheton, wolde lede
Algate his fader cart, and gye.
The cart-hors gonne wel espye
That he ne coude no governaunce,
And gonne for to lepe and launce,
And beren him now up, now doun,
Til that he saw the Scorpioun,
Which that in heven a signe is yit.
And he, for ferde, loste his wit,
Of that, and leet the reynes goon
Of his hors; and they anoon
Gonne up to mounte, and doun descende
Til bothe the eyr and erthe brende;
Til Iupiter, lo, atte laste
Him slow, and fro the carte caste.
Lo, is it not a greet mischaunce,
To lete a fole han governaunce
Of thing that he can not demeine?'
And with this word, soth for to seyne,
He gan alway upper to sore,
And gladded me ay more and more,
So feithfully to me spak he.
Tho gan I loken under me,
And beheld the eyrish bestes,
Cloudes, mistes, and tempestes,
Snowes, hailes, reines, windes,
And thengendring in hir kindes,
And al the wey through whiche I cam;
'O god,' quod I, 'that made Adam,
Moche is thy might and thy noblesse!'
And tho thoughte I upon Boëce,
That writ, 'a thought may flee so hyë,
With fetheres of Philosophye,
To passen everich element;
And whan he hath so fer y-went,
Than may be seen, behind his bak,
Cloud, and al that I of spak.'
Tho gan I wexen in a were,
And seyde, 'I woot wel I am here;
But wher in body or in gost
I noot, y-wis; but god, thou wost!'
For more cleer entendement
Nadde he me never yit y-sent.
And than thoughte I on Marcian,
And eek on Anteclaudian,
That sooth was hir descripcioun
Of al the hevenes regioun,
As fer as that I saw the preve;
Therfor I can hem now beleve.
With that this egle gan to crye:
'Lat be,' quod he, 'thy fantasye;
Wilt thou lere of sterres aught?'
'Nay, certeinly,' quod I, 'right naught;
And why? for I am now to old.'
'Elles I wolde thee have told,'
Quod he, 'the sterres names, lo,
And al the hevenes signes to,
And which they been.' 'No fors,' quod I.
'Yis, pardee,' quod he; 'wostow why?
For whan thou redest poetrye,
How goddes gonne stellifye
Brid, fish, beste, or him or here,

As the Raven, or either Bere,
Or Arïones harpe fyn,
Castor, Pollux, or Delphyn,
Or Atlantes doughtres sevene,
How alle these arn set in hevene;
For though thou have hem ofte on honde,
Yet nostow not wher that they stonde.'
'No fors,' quod I, 'hit is no nede;
I leve as wel, so god me spede,
Hem that wryte of this matere,
As though I knew hir places here;
And eek they shynen here so brighte,
Hit shulde shenden al my sighte,
To loke on hem.' 'That may wel be,'
Quod he. And so forth bar he me
A whyl, and than he gan to crye,
That never herde I thing so hye,
'Now up the heed; for al is wel;
Seynt Iulyan, lo, bon hostel!
See here the Hous of Fame, lo!
Maistow not heren that I do?'
'What?' quod I. 'The grete soun,'
Quod he, 'that rumbleth up and doun
In Fames Hous, ful of tydinges,
Bothe of fair speche and chydinges,
And of fals and soth compouned.
Herkne wel; hit is not rouned.
Herestow not the grete swogh?'
'Yis, pardee,' quod I, 'wel y-nogh.'
'And what soun is it lyk?' quod he.
'Peter! lyk beting of the see,'
Quod I, 'again the roches holowe,
Whan tempest doth the shippes swalowe;
And lat a man stonde, out of doute,
A myle thens, and here hit route;
Or elles lyk the last humblinge
After the clappe of a thundringe,
When Ioves hath the air y-bete;
But hit doth me for fere swete.'
'Nay, dred thee not thereof,' quod he,
'Hit is nothing wil byten thee;
Thou shalt non harm have, trewely.'
And with this word bothe he and I
As nigh the place arryved were
As men may casten with a spere.
I nistē how, but in a strete
He sette me faire on my fete,
And seyde, 'Walke forth a pas,
And tak thyn aventure or cas,
That thou shalt finde in Fames place.'
'Now,' quod I, 'whyl we han space
To speke, or that I go fro thee,
For the love of god, tel me,
In sooth, that wil I of thee lere,
If this noise that I here
Be, as I have herd thee tellen,
Of folk that doun in erthe dwellen,
And comth here in the same wyse
As I thee herde or this devyse;
And that ther lyves body nis
In al that hous that yonder is,
That maketh al this loude fare?'
'No,' quod he, 'by Seynte Clare,
And also wis god rede me!
But o thinge I wil warne thee
Of the which thou wolt have wonder.
Lo, to the House of Fame yonder
Thou wost how cometh every speche,
Hit nedeth noght thee eft to teche.
But understond now right wel this;
Whan any speche y-comen is
Up to the paleys, anon-right
Hit wexeth lyk the same wight,
Which that the word in erthe spak,
Be hit clothed reed or blak;
And hath so verray his lyknesse
That spak the word, that thou wilt gesse
That hit the same body be,
Man or woman, he or she.
And is not this a wonder thing?'
'Yis,' quod I tho, 'by hevene king!'
And with this worde, 'Farwel,' quod he,
'And here I wol abyden thee;
And god of hevene sende thee grace,
Som good to lernen in this place.'
And I of him took leve anoon,
And gan forth to the paleys goon.

Explicit liber secundus.

BOOK III.

INCIPIT LIBER TERCIUS.

Invocation.

O GOD of science and of light,
Apollo, through thy grete might,
This litel laste book thou gye!
Nat that I wilne, for maistrye,
Here art poetical be shewed;
But, for the rym is light and lewed,
Yit make hit sumwhat agreable,
Though som vers faile in a sillable;
And that I do no diligence
To shewe craft, but o sentence.
And if, divyne vertu, thou
Wilt helpe me to shewe now
That in myn hede y-marked is —
Lo, that is for to menen this,
The Hous of Fame to descryve —
Thou shalt see me go, as blyve,
Unto the nexte laure I see,
And kisse hit, for hit is thy tree;
Now entreth in my breste anoon! —

THE DREAM.

Whan I was fro this egle goon,
I gan beholde upon this place.
And certein, or I ferther pace,
I wol yow al the shap devyse
Of hous and site; and al the wyse
How I gan to this place aproche
That stood upon so high a roche,
Hyer stant ther noon in Spaine.
But up I clomb with alle paine,
And though to climbe hit greved me,
Yit I ententif was to see,
And for to pouren wonder lowe,
If I coude any weyes knowe
What maner stoon this roche was;
For hit was lyk a thing of glas,
But that hit shoon ful more clere;
But of what congeled matere
Hit was, I niste redely.
  But at the laste espyed I,
And found that hit was, every deel
A roche of yse, and not of steel.
Thoughte I, 'By Seynt Thomas of Kent!
This were a feble foundement
To bilden on a place hye;
He oughte him litel glorifye
That her-on bilt, god so me save!'
  Tho saw I al the half y-grave
With famous folkes names fele,
That had y-been in mochel wele,
And hir fames wyde y-blowe.
But wel unethes coude I knowe
Any lettres for to rede
Hir names by; for, out of drede,
They were almost of-thowed so,
That of the lettres oon or two
Was molte away of every name
So unfamous was wexe hir fame;
But men seyn, 'What may ever laste?'
  Tho gan I in myn herte caste,
That they were molte awey with hete,
And not awey with stormes bete.
For on that other syde I sey
Of this hill, that northward lay,
How hit was writen ful of names
Of folk that hadden grete fames
Of olde tyme, and yit they were
As fresshe as men had writen hem there
The selve day right, or that houre
That I upon hem gan to poure.
But wel I wiste what hit made;
Hit was conserved with the shade —
Al this wrytinge that I sy —
Of a castel, that stood on hy,
And stood eek on so cold a place,
That hete mighte hit not deface.
  Tho gan I up the hille to goon,
And fond upon the coppe a woon,
That alle the men that ben on lyve
Ne han the cunning to descryve
The beautee of that ilke place,
Ne coude casten no compace
Swiche another for to make,
That mighte of beautee be his make,
Ne [be] so wonderliche y-wrought;
That hit astonieth yit my thought,
And maketh al my wit to swinke
On this castel to bethinke.
So that the grete craft, beautee,
The cast, the curiositee
Ne can I not to yow devyse,
My wit ne may me not suffyse.
  But natheles al the substance

I have yit in my remembrance;
For-why me thoughte, by Seynt Gyle!
Al was of stone of beryle,
Bothe castel and the tour,
And eek the halle, and every bour,
Withouten peces or Ioininges.
But many subtil compassinges,
Babewinnes and pinacles,
Imageries and tabernacles,
I saw; and ful eek of windowes,
As flakes falle in grete snowes.
And eek in ech of the pinacles
Weren sondry habitacles,
In whiche stoden, al withoute —
Ful the castel, al aboute —
Of alle maner of minstrales,
And gestiours, that tellen tales
Bothe of weping and of game,
Of al that longeth unto Fame.
Ther herde I pleyn on an harpe
That souned bothe wel and sharpe,
Orpheus ful craftely,
And on his syde, faste by,
Sat the harper Orion,
And Eacides Chiron,
And other harpers many oon,
And the Bret Glascurion;
And smale harpers with her gleës
Seten under hem in seës,
And gonne on hem upward to gape,
And countrefete hem as an ape,
Or as craft countrefeteth kinde.
Tho saugh I stonden hem behinde,
A-fer fro hem, al by hemselve,
Many thousand tymes twelve,
That maden loude menstralcyes
In cornemuse and shalmyes,
And many other maner pype,
That craftely begunne pype
Bothe in doucet and in rede,
That ben at festes with the brede;
And many floute and lilting-horne,
And pypes made of grene corne,
As han thise litel herde-gromes,
That kepen bestes in the bromes.
Ther saugh I than Atiteris,
And of Athenes dan Pseustis,
And Marcia that lost her skin,
Bothe in face, body, and chin,
For that she wolde envyen, lo!
To pypen bet then Apollo.
Ther saugh I famous, olde and yonge,
Pypers of the Duche tonge,
To lerne love-daunces, springes,
Reyes, and these straunge thinges.
Tho saugh I in another place
Stonden in a large space,
Of hem that maken blody soun
In trumpe, beme, and clarioun;
For in fight and blood-shedinge
Is used gladly clarioninge.
Ther herde I trumpen Messenus,
Of whom that speketh Virgilius.
Ther herde I Ioab trumpe also,
Theodomas, and other mo;
And alle that used clarion
In Cataloigne and Aragon,
That in hir tyme famous were
To lerne, saugh I trumpe there.
Ther saugh I sitte in other seës,
Pleyinge upon sondry gleës,
Whiche that I cannot nevene,
Mo then sterres been in hevene,
Of whiche I nil as now not ryme,
For ese of yow, and losse of tyme:
For tyme y-lost, this knowen ye,
By no way may recovered be.
Ther saugh I pleyen Iogelours,
Magiciens and tregetours,
And phitonesses, charmeresses,
Olde wicches, sorceresses,
That use exorsisaciouns,
And eek thise fumigaciouns;
And clerkes eek, which conne wel
Al this magyke naturel,
That craftely don hir ententes,
To make, in certeyn ascendentes,
Images, lo, through which magyk
To make a man ben hool or syk.
Ther saugh I thee, queen Medea,
And Circes eke, and Calipsa;
Ther saugh I Hermes Ballenus,
Lymote, and eek Simon Magus.
Ther saugh I, and knew hem by name,
That by such art don men han fame.
Ther saugh I Colle tregetour
Upon a table of sicamour
Pleye an uncouthe thing to telle;
I saugh him carien a wind-melle
Under a walsh-note shale.
What shuld I make lenger tale
Of al the peple that I say,
Fro hennes in-to domesday?
Whan I had al this folk beholde,
And fond me lous, and nought y-holde.

And eft y-mused longe whyle
Upon these walles of beryle,
That shoon ful lighter than a glas,
And made wel more than hit was
To semen, every thing, y-wis,
As kinde thing of fames is;
I gan forth romen til I fond
The castel-yate on my right hond,
Which that so wel corven was
That never swich another nas;
And yit hit was by aventure
Y-wrought, as often as by cure.
Hit nedeth noght yow for to tellen,
To make yow to longe dwellen,
Of this yates florisshinges,
Ne of compasses, ne of kervinges,
Ne how they hatte in masoneries,
As, corbets fulle of imageries.
But, lord! so fair hit was to shewe,
For hit was al with gold behewe.
But in I wente, and that anoon;
Ther mette I crying many oon,—
'A larges, larges, hold up wel!
God save the lady of this pel,
Our owne gentil lady Fame,
And hem that wilnen to have name
Of us!' Thus herde I cryen alle,
And faste comen out of halle,
And shoken nobles and sterlinges.
And somme crouned were as kinges,
With crounes wroght ful of losenges;
And many riban, and many frenges
Were on hir clothes trewely.
Tho atte laste aspyed I
That pursevauntes and heraudes,
That cryen riche folkes laudes,
Hit weren alle; and every man
Of hem, as I yow tellen can,
Had on him throwen a vesture,
Which that men clepe a cote-armure,
Enbrowded wonderliche riche,
Al-though they nere nought y-liche.
But noght nil I, so mote I thryve,
Been aboute to discryve
Al these armes that ther weren,
That they thus on hir cotes beren,
For hit to me were impossible;
Men mighte make of hem a bible
Twenty foot thikke, as I trowe.
For certeyn, who-so coude y-knowe
Mighte ther alle the armes seen
Of famous folk that han y-been
In Auffrike, Europe, and Asye,
Sith first began the chevalrye.
Lo! how shulde I now telle al this?
Ne of the halle eek what nede is
To tellen yow, that every wal
Of hit, and floor, and roof and al
Was plated half a fote thikke
Of gold, and that nas no-thing wikke,
But, for to prove in alle wyse,
As fyn as ducat in Venyse,
Of whiche to lyte al in my pouche is?
And they wer set as thikke of nouchis
Fulle of the fynest stones faire,
That men rede in the Lapidaire,
As greses growen in a mede;
But hit were al to longe to rede
The names; and therfore I pace.
But in this riche lusty place,
That Fames halle called was,
Ful moche prees of folk ther nas,
Ne crouding, for to mochil prees.
But al on hye, above a dees,
Sitte in a see imperial,
That maad was of a rubee al,
Which that a carbuncle is y-called,
I saugh, perpetually y-stalled,
A feminyne creature;
That never formed by nature
Nas swich another thing y-seye.
For altherfirst, soth for to seye,
Me thoughte that she was so lyte,
That the lengthe of a cubyte
Was lenger than she semed be;
But thus sone, in a whyle, she
Hir tho so wonderliche streighte,
That with hir feet she therthe reighte,
And with hir heed she touched hevene,
Ther as shynen sterres sevene.
And ther-to eek, as to my wit,
I saugh a gretter wonder yit,
Upon hir eyen to beholde;
But certeyn I hem never tolde;
For as fele eyen hadde she
As fetheres upon foules be,
Or weren on the bestes foure,
That goddes trone gunne honoure,
As Iohn writ in thapocalips.
Hir heer, that oundy was and crips,
As burned gold hit shoon to see.
And sooth to tellen, also she
Had also fele up-standing eres
And tongues, as on bestes heres;
And on hir feet wexen saugh I
Partriches winges redely.

But, lord! the perrie and the richesse
I saugh sitting on this goddesse!
And, lord! the hevenish melodye
Of songes, ful of armonye,
I herde aboute her trone y-songe,
That al the paleys-walles ronge!
So song the mighty Muse, she
That cleped is Caliopee,
And hir eighte sustren eke,
That in hir face semen meke;
And evermo, eternally,
They songe of Fame, as tho herde I: —
'Heried be thou and thy name,
Goddesse of renoun and of fame!'
Tho was I war, lo, atte laste,
As I myn eyen gan up caste,
That this ilke noble quene
On hir shuldres gan sustene
Bothe tharmes and the name
Of tho that hadde large fame;
Alexander, and Hercules
That with a sherte his lyf lees!
Thus fond I sitting this goddesse,
In nobley, honour, and richesse;
Of which I stinte a whyle now,
Other thing to tellen yow.
Tho saugh I stonde on either syde,
Streight doun to the dores wide,
Fro the dees, many a pileer
Of metal, that shoon not ful cleer;
But though they nere of no richesse,
Yet they were maad for greet noblesse,
And in hem greet [and hy] sentence;
And folk of digne reverence,
Of whiche I wol yow telle fonde,
Upon the piler saugh I stonde.
Alderfirst, lo, ther I sigh,
Upon a piler stonde on high,
That was of lede and yren fyn,
Him of secte Saturnyn,
The Ebrayk Iosephus, the olde,
That of Iewes gestes tolde;
And bar upon his shuldres hye
The fame up of the Iewerye.
And by him stoden other sevene,
Wyse and worthy for to nevene,
To helpen him bere up the charge,
Hit was so hevy and so large.
And for they writen of batailes,
As wel as other olde mervailes,
Therfor was, lo, this pileer,
Of which that I yow telle heer,
Of lede and yren bothe, y-wis.
For yren Martes metal is,
Which that god is of bataile;
And the leed, withouten faile,
Is, lo, the metal of Saturne,
That hath ful large wheel to turne.
Tho stoden forth, on every rowe,
Of hem which that I coude knowe,
Thogh I hem noght by ordre telle,
To make yow to long to dwelle.
These, of whiche I ginne rede,
Ther saugh I stonden, out of drede:
Upon an yren piler strong,
That peynted was, al endelong,
With tygres blode in every place,
The Tholosan that highte Stace,
That bar of Thebes up the fame
Upon his shuldres, and the name
Also of cruel Achilles.
And by him stood, withouten lees,
Ful wonder hye on a pileer
Of yren, he, the gret Omeer;
And with him Dares and Tytus
Before, and eek he, Lollius,
And Guido eek de Columpnis,
And English Gaufride eek, y-wis;
And ech of these, as have I Ioye,
Was besy for to bere up Troye.
So hevy ther-of was the fame,
That for to bere hit was no game.
But yit I gan ful wel espye,
Betwix hem was a litel envye.
Oon seyde, Omere made lyes,
Feyninge in his poetryes,
And was to Grekes favorable;
Therfor held he hit but fable.
Tho saugh I stonde on a pileer,
That was of tinned yren cleer,
That Latin poete, [dan] Virgyle,
That bore hath up a longe whyle
The fame of Pius Eneas.
And next him on a piler was,
Of coper, Venus clerk, Ovyde,
That hath y-sowen wonder wyde
The grete god of Loves name.
And ther he bar up wel his fame,
Upon this piler, also hye
As I might see hit with myn yë:
For-why this halle, of whiche I rede
Was woxe on highte, lengthe and brede,
Wel more, by a thousand del,
Than hit was erst, that saugh I wel.
Tho saugh I, on a piler by,
Of yren wroght ful sternely,

The grete poete, daun Lucan,
And on his shuldres bar up than,
As highe as that I mighte see,
The fame of Iulius and Pompee.
And by him stoden alle these clerkes,
That writen of Romes mighty werkes,
That, if I wolde hir names telle,
Al to longe moste I dwelle.
And next him on a piler stood
Of soulfre, lyk as he were wood,
Dan Claudian, the soth to telle,
That bar up al the fame of helle,
Of Pluto, and of Proserpyne,
That quene is of the derke pyne.
What shulde I more telle of this?
The halle was al ful, y-wis,
Of hem that writen olde gestes,
As ben on treës rokes nestes;
But hit a ful confus matere
Were al the gestes for to here,
That they of write, and how they highte.
But whyl that I beheld this sighte,
I herde a noise aprochen blyve,
That ferde as been don in an hyve,
Agen her tyme of out-fleyinge;
Right swiche a maner murmuringe,
For al the world, hit semed me.
Tho gan I loke aboute and see,
That ther com entring in the halle
A right gret company with-alle,
And that of sondry regiouns,
Of alleskinnes condiciouns,
That dwelle in erthe under the mone,
Pore and ryche. And also sone
As they were come into the halle,
They gonne doun on knëës falle
Before this ilke noble quene,
And seyde, 'Graunte us, lady shene,
Ech of us, of thy grace, a bone!'
And somme of hem she graunted sone,
And somme she werned wel and faire;
And somme she graunted the contraire
Of hir axing utterly.
But thus I seye yow trewely,
What hir cause was, I niste.
For this folk, ful wel I wiste,
They hadde good fame ech deserved,
Althogh they were diversly served;
Right as hir suster, dame Fortune,
Is wont to serven in comune.
Now herkne how she gan to paye
That gonne hir of hir grace praye;
And yit, lo, al this companye
Seyden sooth, and noght a lye.
'Madame,' seyden they, 'we be
Folk that heer besechen thee,
That thou graunte us now good fame,
And lete our werkes han that name;
In ful recompensaciouu
Of good werk, give us good renoun.'
'I werne yow hit,' quod she anoon,
'Ye gete of me good fame noon,
By god! and therfor go your wey.'
'Alas,' quod they, 'and welaway!
Telle us, what may your cause be?'
'For me list hit noght,' quod she;
'No wight shal speke of yow, y-wis,
Good ne harm, ne that ne this.'
And with that word she gan to calle
Hir messanger, that was in halle,
And bad that he shulde faste goon,
Up peyne to be blind anoon,
For Eolus, the god of winde;
'In Trace ther ye shul him finde,
And bid him bringe his clarioun,
That is ful dyvers of his soun,
And hit is cleped Clere Laude,
With which he wont is to heraude
Hem that me list y-preised be:
And also bid him how that he
Bringe his other clarioun,
That highte Sclaundre in every toun,
With which he wont is to diffame
Hem that me list, and do hem shame.'
This messanger gan faste goon,
And found wher, in a cave of stoon,
In a contree that highte Trace,
This Eolus, with harde grace,
Held the windes in distresse,
And gan hem under him to presse,
That they gonne as beres rore,
He bond and pressed hem so sore.
This messanger gan faste crye,
'Rys up,' quod he, 'and faste hye,
Til that thou at my lady be;
And tak thy clarions eek with thee,
And speed thee forth.' And he anon
Took to a man, that hight Triton,
His clariouns to bere tho,
And leet a certeyn wind to go,
That blew so hidously and hye,
That hit ne lefte not a skye
In al the welken longe and brood.
This Eolus no-wher abood
Til he was come at Fames feet,
And eek the man that Triton heet;

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And ther he stood, as still as stoon.
And her-withal ther com anoon
Another huge companye
Of gode folk, and gunne crye,
'Lady, graunte us now good fame,
And lat our werkes han that name
Now, in honour of gentilesse,
And also god your soule blesse!
For we han wel deserved hit,
Therfor is right that we ben quit.'
'As thryve I,' quod she, 'ye shal faile,
Good werkes shal yow noght availe
To have of me good fame as now.
But wite ye what? I graunte yow,
That ye shal have a shrewed fame
And wikked loos, and worse name,
Though ye good loos have wel deserved.
Now go your wey, for ye be served;
And thou, dan Eolus, let see!
Tak forth thy trumpe anon,' quod she,
'That is y-cleped Sclaunder light,
And blow hir loos, that every wight
Speke of hem harm and shrewednesse,
In stede of good and worthinesse.
For thou shalt trumpe al the contraire
Of that they han don wel or faire.'
'Alas,' thoughte I, 'what aventures
Han these sory creatures!
For they, amonges al the pres,
Shul thus be shamed gilteles!
But what! hit moste nedes be.'
What did this Eolus, but he
Tok out his blakke trumpe of bras,
That fouler than the devil was,
And gan this trumpe for to blowe,
As al the world shulde overthrowe;
That through-out every regioun
Wente this foule trumpes soun,
As swift as pelet out of gonne,
Whan fyr is in the poudre ronne.
And swiche a smoke gan out-wende
Out of his foule trumpes ende,
Blak, blo, grenish, swartish reed,
As doth wher that men melte leed,
Lo, al on high fro the tuel!
And therto oo thing saugh I wel,
That, the ferther that hit ran,
The gretter wexen hit began,
As doth the river from a welle,
And hit stank as the pit of helle.
Alas, thus was hir shame y-ronge,
And giltelees, on every tonge.
Tho com the thridde companye,

And gunne up to the dees to hye,
And doun on knees they fille anon,
And seyde, 'We ben everichon
Folk that han ful trewely
Deserved fame rightfully,
And praye yow, hit mot be knowe,
Right as hit is, and forth y-blowe.'
'I graunte,' quod she, 'for me list
That now your gode werk be wist;
And yit ye shul han better loos,
Right in dispyt of alle your foos,
Than worthy is; and that anoon:
Lat now,' quod she, 'thy trumpe goon,
Thou Eolus, that is so blak;
And out thyn other trumpe tak
That highte Laude, and blow hit so
That through the world hir fame go
Al esely, and not to faste,
That hit be knowen atte laste.'
'Ful gladly, lady myn,' he seyde;
And out his trumpe of golde he brayde
Anon, and sette hit to his mouthe,
And blew hit est, and west, and southe,
And north, as loude as any thunder,
That every wight hadde of hit wonder,
So brode hit ran, or than hit stente.
And, certes, al the breeth that wente
Out of his trumpes mouthe smelde
As men a pot-ful bawme helde
Among a basket ful of roses;
This favour dide he til hir loses.
And right with this I gan aspye,
Ther com the ferthe companye —
But certeyn they were wonder fewe —
And gonne stonden in a rewe,
And seyden, 'Certes, lady brighte,
We han don wel with al our mighte;
But we ne kepen have no fame.
Hyd our werkes and our name,
For goddes love! for certes we
Han certeyn doon hit for bountee,
And for no maner other thing.'
'I graunte yow al your asking,'
Quod she; 'let your werk be deed.'
With that aboute I clew myn heed,
And saugh anoon the fifte route
That to this lady gonne loute,
And doun on knees anoon to falle;
And to hir tho besoughten alle
To hyde hir gode werkes eek,
And seyde, they yeven noght a leek
For fame, ne for swich renoun;
For they, for contemplacioun

And goddes love, hadde y-wrought;
Ne of fame wolde they nought.
'What?' quod she, 'and be ye wood?
And wene ye for to do good,
And for to have of that no fame?
Have ye dispyt to have my name?
Nay, ye shul liven everichoon!
Blow thy trumpe and that anoon,'
Quod she, 'thou Eolus, I hote,
And ring this folkes werk by note,
That al the world may of hit here.'
And he gan blowe hir loos so clere
In his golden clarioun,
That through the world wente the soun,
So kenely, and eek so softe;
But atte laste hit was on-lofte.
Thoo com the sexte companye,
And gonne faste on Fame crye.
Right verraily, in this manere
They seyden: 'Mercy, lady dere!
To telle certein, as hit is,
We han don neither that ne this,
But ydel al our lyf y-be.
But, natheles, yit preye we,
That we mowe han so good a fame,
And greet renoun and knowen name,
As they that han don noble gestes,
And acheved alle hir lestes,
As wel of love as other thing;
Al was us never broche ne ring,
Ne elles nought, from wimmen sent,
Ne ones in hir herte y-ment
To make us only frendly chere,
But mighte temen us on bere;
Yit lat us to the peple seme
Swiche as the world may of us deme,
That wimmen loven us for wood.
Hit shal don us as moche good,
And to our herte as moche availe
To countrepeise ese and travaile,
As we had wonne hit with labour;
For that is dere boght honour
At regard of our grete ese.
And yit thou most us more plese;
Let us be holden eek, therto,
Worthy, wyse, and gode also,
And riche, and happy unto love.
For goddes love, that sit above,
Though we may not the body have
Of wimmen, yet, so god yow save!
Let men glewe on us the name;
Suffyceth that we han the fame.'
'I graunte,' quod she, 'by my trouthe!
Now, Eolus, with-outen slouthe,
Tak out thy trumpe of gold, let see,
And blow as they han axed me,
That every man wene hem at ese,
Though they gon in ful badde lese.'
This Eolus gan hit so blowe,
That through the world hit was y-knowe.
Tho com the seventh route anoon,
And fel on kneës everichoon,
And seyde, 'Lady, graunte us sone
The same thing, the same bone,
That [ye] this nexte folk han doon.'
'Fy on yow,' quod she, 'everichoon!
Ye masty swyn, ye ydel wrecches,
Ful of roten slowe tecches!
What? false theves! wher ye wolde
Be famous good, and no-thing nolde
Deserve why, ne never roughte?
Men rather yow to-hangen oughte!
For ye be lyk the sweynte cat,
That wolde have fish; but wostow what?
He wolde no-thing wete his clowes.
Yvel thrift come on your Iowes,
And eek on myn, if I hit graunte,
Or do yow favour, yow to avaunte!
Thou Eolus, thou king of Trace!
Go, blow this folk a sory grace,'
Quod she, 'anoon; and wostow how?
As I shal telle thee right now;
Sey: "These ben they that wolde honour
Have, and do noskinnes labour,
Ne do no good, and yit han laude;
And that men wende that bele Isaude
Ne coude hem noght of love werne;
And yit she that grint at a querne
Is al to good to ese hir herte."'
This Eolus anon up sterte,
And with his blakke clarioun
He gan to blasen out a soun,
As loude as belweth wind in helle.
And eek therwith, [the] sooth to telle,
This soun was [al] so ful of Iapes,
As ever mowes were in apes.
And that wente al the world aboute,
That every wight gan on hem shoute,
And for to laughe as they were wode;
Such game fonde they in hir hode.
Tho com another companye,
That had y-doon the traiterye,
The harm, the gretest wikkednesse
That any herte couthe gesse;
And preyed hir to han good fame,
And that she nolde hem doon no shame

But yeve hem loos and good renoun,
And do hit blowe in clarioun.
'Nay, wis!' quod she, 'hit were a vyce;
Al be ther in me no Iustyce,
Me listeth not to do hit now,
Ne this nil I not graunte you.'
Tho come ther lepinge in a route,
And gonne choppen al aboute
Every man upon the croune,
That al the halle gan to soune,
And seyden: 'Lady, lefe and dere,
We ben swich folk as ye mowe here.
To tellen al the tale aright,
We ben shrewes, every wight,
And han delyt in wikkednes,
As gode folk han in goodnes;
And Ioye to be knowen shrewes,
And fulle of vyce and wikked thewes;
Wherfor we preyen yow, a-rowe,
That our fame swich be knowe
In alle thing right as hit is.'
'I graunte hit yow,' quod she, 'y-wis.
But what art thou that seyst this tale,
That werest on thy hose a pale,
And on thy tipet swiche a belle!'
'Madame,' quod he, 'sooth to telle,
I am that ilke shrewe, y-wis,
That brende the temple of Isidis
In Athenes, lo, that citee.'
'And wherfor didest thou so?' quod she.
'By my thrift,' quod he, 'madame,
I wolde fayn han had a fame,
As other folk hadde in the toun,
Al-thogh they were of greet renoun
For hir vertu and for hir thewes;
Thoughte I, as greet a fame han shrewes,
Thogh hit be [but] for shrewednesse,
As gode folk han for goodnesse;
And sith I may not have that oon,
That other nil I noght for-goon.
And for to gette of Fames hyre,
The temple sette I al a-fyre.
Now do our loos be blowen swythe,
As wisly be thou ever blythe.'
'Gladly,' quod she; 'thou Eolus,
Herestow not what they preyen us?'
'Madame, yis, ful wel,' quod he,
'And I wil trumpen hit, parde!'
And tok his blakke trumpe faste,
And gan to puffen and to blaste,
Til hit was at the worldes ende.
With that I gan aboute wende;
For oon that stood right at my bak,
Me thoughte, goodly to me spak,
And seyde: 'Frend, what is thy name?
Artow come hider to han fame?'
'Nay, for-sothe, frend!' quod I;
'I cam noght hider, graunt mercy!
For no swich cause, by my heed!
Suffyceth me, as I were deed,
That no wight have my name in honde.
I woot my-self best how I stonde;
For what I drye or what I thinke,
I wol my-selven al hit drinke,
Certeyn, for the more part,
As ferforth as I can myn art.'
'But what dost thou here than?' quod he.
Quod I, 'that wol I tellen thee,
The cause why I stondē here: —
Som newe tydings for to lere: —
Som newe thinges, I not what,
Tydinges, other this or that,
Of love, or swiche thinges glade.
For certeynly, he that me made
To comen hider, seyde me,
I shulde bothe here and see,
In this place, wonder thinges;
But these be no swiche tydinges
As I mene of.' 'No?' quod he.
And I answerde, 'No, pardee!
For wel I wiste, ever yit,
Sith that first I hadde wit,
That som folk han desyred fame
Dyversly, and loos, and name;
But certeynly, I niste how
Ne wher that Fame dwelte, er now;
Ne eek of hir descripcioun,
Ne also hir condicioun,
Ne the ordre of hir dome,
Unto the tyme I hider come.'
'[Whiche] be, lo, these tydinges,
That thou now [thus] hider bringes,
That thou hast herd?' quod he to me;
'But now, no fors; for wel I see
What thou desyrest for to here.
Com forth, and stond no longer here,
And I wol thee, with-outen drede,
In swich another place lede,
Ther thou shalt here many oon.'
Tho gan I forth with him to goon
Out of the castel, soth to seye.
Tho saugh I stonde in a valeye,
Under the castel, faste by,
An hous, that *domus Dedali*,
That *Laborintus* cleped is,
Nas maad so wonderliche, y-wis,

Ne half so queynteliche y-wrought.
And evermo, so swift as thought,
This queynte hous aboute wente,
That never-mo hit stille stente.
And ther-out com so greet a noise,
That, had hit stonden upon Oise,
Men mighte hit han herd esely
To Rome, I trowe sikerly.
And the noyse which that I herde,
For al the world right so hit ferde,
As doth the routing of the stoon
That from thengyn is leten goon.
And al this hous, of whiche I rede,
Was made of twigges, falwe, rede,
And grene eek, and som weren whyte,
Swiche as men to these cages thwyte,
Or maken of these paniers,
Or elles hottes or dossers;
That, for the swough and for the twigges,
This hous was also ful of gigges,
And also ful eek of chirkinges,
And of many other werkinges;
And eek this hous hath of entrees
As fele as leves been on trees
In somer, whan they grene been;
And on the roof men may yit seen
A thousand holes, and wel mo,
To leten wel the soun out go.
And by day, in every tyde,
Ben al the dores open wyde,
And by night, echoon, unshette;
Ne porter ther is non to lette
No maner tydings in to pace;
Ne never reste is in that place,
That hit nis fild ful of tydinges,
Other loude, or of whispringes;
And, over alle the houses angles,
Is ful of rouninges and of Iangles
Of werre, of pees, of mariages,
Of reste, of labour of viages,
Of abood, of deeth, of lyfe,
Of love, of hate, acorde, of stryfe,
Of loos, of lore, and of winninges,
Of hele, of sekenesse, of bildinges,
Of faire windes, of tempestes,
Of qualme of folk, and eek of bestes;
Of dyvers transmutaciouns
Of estats, and eek of regiouns;
Of trust, of drede, of Ielousye,
Of wit, of winninge, of folye;
Of plentee, and of greet famyne,
Of chepe, of derth, and of ruyne;
Of good or mis governement,
Of fyr, of dyvers accident.
And lo, this hous, of whiche I wryte,
Siker be ye, hit nas not lyte;
For hit was sixty myle of lengthe;
Al was the timber of no strengthe,
Yet hit is founded to endure
Whyl that hit list to Aventure,
That is the moder of tydinges,
As the see of welles and springes,—
And hit was shapen lyk a cage.
'Certes,' quod I, 'in al myn age,
Ne saugh I swich a hous as this.'
And as I wondred me, y-wis,
Upon this hous, tho war was I
How that myn egle, faste by,
Was perched hye upon a stoon;
And I gan streighte to him goon
And seyde thus: 'I preye thee
That thou a whyl abyde me
For goddes love, and let me seen
What wondres in this place been;
For yit, paraventure, I may lere
Som good ther-on, or sumwhat here
That leef me were, or that I wente.'
'Peter! that is myn entente,'
Quod he to me; 'therfor I dwelle;
But certein, oon thing I thee telle,
That, but I bringe thee ther-inne,
Ne shalt thou never cunne ginne
To come in-to hit, out of doute,
So faste hit whirleth, lo, aboute.
But sith that Ioves, of his grace,
As I have seyd, wol thee solace
Fynally with [swiche] thinges,
Uncouthe sightes and tydinges,
To passe with thyn hevinesse;
Suche routhe hath he of thy distresse,
That thou suffrest debonairly—
And wost thy-selven utterly
Disesperat of alle blis,
Sith that Fortune hath maad a-mis
The [fruit] of al thyn hertes reste
Languisshe and eek in point to breste—
That he, through his mighty meryte,
Wol do thee ese, al be hit lyte,
And yaf expres commaundement,
To whiche I am obedient,
To furthre thee with al my might,
And wisse and teche thee aright
Wher thou maist most tydinges here;
Shaltow anoon heer many oon lere.'
With this worde he, right anoon,
Hente me up bitwene his toon,

And at a windowe in me broghte,
That in this hous was, as me thoghte —
And ther-withal, me thoghte hit stente,
And no-thing hit aboute wente —
And me sette in the flore adoun.
But which a congregacioun
Of folk, as I saugh rome aboute
Some within and some withoute,
Nas never seen, ne shal ben eft;
That, certes, in the world nis left
So many formed by Nature,
Ne deed so many a creature;
That wel unethe, in that place,
Hadde I oon foot-brede of space;
And every wight that I saugh there
Rouned ech in otheres ere
A newe tyding prevely,
Or elles tolde al openly
Right thus, and seyde: 'Nost not thou
That is betid, lo, late or now?'
'No,' quod [the other], 'tel me what;' —
And than he tolde him this and that,
And swoor ther-to that hit was sooth —
'Thus hath he seyd' — and 'Thus he dooth' —
'Thus shal hit be' — 'Thus herde I seye' —
'That shal be found' — 'That dar I leye:' —
That all the folk that is a-lyve
Ne han the cunning to discryve
The thinges that I herde there,
What aloude, and what in ere.
But al the wonder-most was this: —
Whan oon had herd a thing, y-wis,
He com forth to another wight,
And gan him tellen, anoon-right,
The same that to him was told,
Or hit a furlong-way was old,
But gan somwhat for to eche
To this tyding in this speche
More than hit ever was.
And nat so sone departed nas
That he fro him, that he ne mette
With the thridde; and, or he lette
Any stounde, he tolde him als;
Were the tyding sooth or fals,
Yit wolde he telle hit nathelees,
And evermo with more encrees
Than hit was erst. Thus north and southe
Went every [word] fro mouth to mouthe,
And that encresing ever-mo,
As fyr is wont to quikke and go
From a sparke spronge amis,
Til al a citee brent up is.
And, whan that was ful y-spronge,
And woxen more on every tonge
Than ever hit was, [hit] wente anoon
Up to a windowe, out to goon;
Or, but hit mighte out ther pace,
Hit gan out crepe at som crevace,
And fleigh forth faste for the nones.
And sometyme saugh I tho, at ones,
A lesing and a sad soth-sawe,
That gonne of aventure drawe
Out at a windowe for to pace;
And, when they metten in that place,
They were a-chekked bothe two,
And neither of hem moste out go;
For other so they gonne croude,
Til eche of hem gan cryen loude,
'Lat me go first!' 'Nay, but lat me!
And here I wol ensuren thee,
With the nones that thou wolt do so,
That I shal never fro thee go,
But be thyn owne sworen brother!
We wil medle us ech with other,
That no man, be he never so wrothe,
Shal han that oon [of] two, but bothe
At ones, al beside his leve,
Come we a-morwe or on eve,
Be we cryed or stille y-rouned.'
Thus saugh I fals and sooth compouned
Togeder flee for oo tydinge.
Thus out at holes gonne wringe
Every tyding streight to Fame;
And she gan yeven eche his name,
After hir disposicioun,
And yaf hem eek duracioun,
Some to wexe and wane sone,
As dooth the faire whyte mone,
And leet hem gon. Ther mighte I seen
Wenged wondres faste fleen,
Twenty thousand in a route,
As Eolus hem blew aboute.
And, lord! this hous, in alle tymes,
Was ful of shipmen and pilgrymes,
With scrippes bret-ful of lesinges,
Entremedled with tydinges,
And eek alone by hem-selve.
O, many a thousand tymes twelve
Saugh I eek of these pardoneres,
Currours, and eek messangeres,
With boistes crammed ful of lyes

As ever vessel was with lyes.
And as I alther-fastest wente
Aboute, and dide al myn entente
Me for to pleye and for to lere,
And eek a tyding for to here,
That I had herd of som contree
That shal not now be told for me;—
For hit no nede is, redely;
Folk can singe hit bet than I;
For al mot out, other late or rathe,
Alle the sheves in the lathe;—
I herde a gret noise withalle
In a corner of the halle,
Ther men of love tydings tolde,
And I gan thiderward beholde;

For I saugh renninge every wight,
As faste as that they hadden might;
And everich cryed, 'What thing is that?'
And som seyde, 'I not never what.'
And whan they were alle on an hepe,
Tho behinde gonne up lepe,
And clamben up on othere faste,
And up the nose on hye caste,
And troden faste on othere heles
And stampe, as men don after eles.
Atte laste I saugh a man,
Which that I [nevene] naught ne can;
But he semed for to be
A man of greet auctoritee . . . .

(*Unfinished.*)

THE LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN.

THE Prologue to this Poem exists in two different versions, which differ widely from each other in many passages. The arrangement of the material is also different.

For the sake of clearness, the earlier version is here called 'Text A,' and the later version 'Text B.'

'Text A' exists in one MS. only, but this MS. is of early date and much importance. It is the MS. marked Gg. 4. 27 in the Cambridge University Library. This text is printed on the left-hand side of the following pages.

'Text B' occupies the right-hand side of the following pages. It follows the Fairfax MS. mainly.

THE PROLOGE OF .IX. GOODE WIMMEN.

A THOUSAND sythes have I herd men telle,
That ther is Ioye in heven, and peyne in helle;
And I acorde wel that hit be so;
But natheles, this wot I wel also,
That ther nis noon that dwelleth in this contree,
That either hath in helle or heven y-be,
Ne may of hit non other weyes witen,
But as he hath herd seyd, or founde hit writen;
For by assay ther may no man hit preve.
But goddes forbode, but men shulde leve
Wel more thing then men han seen with yë!
Men shal nat wenen every-thing a lyë
For that he seigh it nat of yore ago.
God wot, a thing is never the lesse so

Thogh every wight ne may hit nat y-see.
Bernard the monk ne saugh nat al, parde!
Than mote we to bokes that we finde,
Through which that olde thinges been in minde,
And to the doctrine of these olde wyse,
Yeven credence, in every skilful wyse,
And trowen on these olde aproved stories
Of holinesse, of regnes, of victories,

THE PROLOGE OF .IX. GOODE WIMMEN.

A THOUSAND tymes have I herd men telle,
That ther is Ioye in heven, and peyne in helle;
And I acorde wel that hit is so;
But natheles, yit wot I wel also,
That ther nis noon dwelling in this contree,
That either hath in heven or helle y-be,
Ne may of hit non other weyes witen,
But as he hath herd seyd, or founde hit writen;
For by assay ther may no man hit preve.
But god forbede but men shulde leve
Wel more thing then men han seen with yë!
Men shal nat wenen every-thing a lyë
But-if him-self hit seeth, or elles dooth;
For, god wot, thing is never the lasse sooth,
Thogh every wight ne may hit nat y-see.
Bernard the monk ne saugh nat al, parde!
Than mote we to bokes that we finde,
Through which that olde thinges been in minde,
And to the doctrine of these olde wyse,
Yeve credence, in every skilful wyse,
That tellen of these olde appreved stories,
Of holinesse, of regnes, of victories,

Of love, of hate, of other sundry thinges,
Of which I may not maken rehersinges.
And if that olde bokes were a-weye,
Y-loren were of remembraunce the keye.
Wel oghte us than on olde bokes leve,
Ther-as ther is non other assay by preve.

And, as for me, though that my wit be lyte,
On bokes for to rede I me delyte,
And in myn herte have hem in reverence;
And to hem yeve swich lust and swich credence,
That there is wel unethe game noon
That from my bokes make me to goon,
But hit be other up-on the haly-day,
Or elles in the Ioly tyme of May;

Whan that I here the smale foules singe,
And that the floures ginne for to springe,
Farwel my studie, as lasting that sesoun!
Now have I therto this condicioun
That, of alle the floures in the mede,
Than love I most these floures whyte and rede,
Swiche as men callen daysies in our toun.
To hem have I so greet affeccioun,
As I seyde erst, whan comen is the May,
That in my bed ther daweth me no day
That I nam up, and walking in the mede
To seen these floures ageín the sonne sprede,
Whan hit up-riseth by the morwe shene,
The longe day, thus walking in the grene.
And whan the sonne ginneth for to weste,
Than closeth hit, and draweth hit to reste.
So sore hit is afered of the night,
Til on the morwe, that hit is dayes light.
This dayesye, of alle floures flour,
Fulfild of vertu and of alle honour,
And ever y-lyke fair and fresh of hewe,
As wel in winter as in somer newe,

Of love, of hate, of other sundry thinges,
Of whiche I may not maken rehersinges.
And if that olde bokes were a-weye,
Y-loren were of remembraunce the keye.
Wel oghte us than honouren and beleve
These bokes, ther we han non other preve.
And as for me, thogh that I can but lyte,
On bokes for to rede I me delyte,
And to hem yeve I feyth and ful credence,
And in myn herte have hem in reverence
So hertely, that ther is game noon
That fro my bokes maketh me to goon,
But hit be seldom, on the holyday;
Save, certeynly, whan that the month of May
Is comen, and that I here the foules singe,
And that the floures ginnen for to springe,
Farwel my book and my devocioun!
Now have I than swich a condicioun,
That, of alle the floures in the mede,
Than love I most these floures whyte and rede,
Swiche as men callen daysies in our toun.
To hem have I so greet affeccioun,
As I seyde erst, whan comen is the May,
That in my bed ther daweth me no day
That I nam up, and walking in the mede
To seen this flour ageín the sonne sprede,

Whan hit upryseth erly by the morwe;
That blisful sighte softneth al my sorwe,
So glad am I whan that I have presence
Of hit, to doon al maner reverence,

As she, that is of alle floures flour,
Fulfilled of al vertu and honour,
And ever y-lyke fair, and fresh of hewe;
And I love hit, and ever y-lyke newe,
And ever shal, til that myn herte dye;
Al swere I nat, of this I wol nat lye,
Ther loved no wight hotter in his lyve.
And whan that hit is eve, I renne blyve,
As sone as ever the sonne ginneth weste,
To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste,
For fere of night, so hateth she derknesse!
Hir chere is pleynly sprad in the brightnesse

Fain wolde I preisen, if I coude aright;
But wo is me, hit lyth nat in my might!
For wel I wot, that folk han her-beforn
Of making ropen, and lad a-wey the corn;
And I come after, glening here and there,
And am ful glad if I may finde an ere
Of any goodly word that they han left.
And, if hit happe me rehersen eft
That they han in her fresshe songes sayd,
I hope that they wil nat ben evel apayd,
Sith hit is seid in forthering and honour
Of hem that either serven leef or flour.
For trusteth wel, I ne have nat undertake
As of the leef, ageyn the flour, to make;
Ne of the flour to make, ageyn the leef,
No more than of the corn ageyn the sheef.
For, as to me, is leefer noon ne lother;
I am with-holde yit with never nother.
I not who serveth leef, ne who the flour;
That nis nothing the entent of my labour.
For this werk is al of another tunne,
Of olde story, er swich stryf was begunne.
But wherfor that I spak, to yeve credence
To bokes olde and doon hem reverence,
Is for men shulde autoritees beleve,
Ther as ther lyth non other assay by preve.
For myn entent is, or I fro yow fare,
The naked text in English to declare
Of the sonne, for ther hit wol unclose.
Allas! that I ne had English, ryme or prose,
Suffisant this flour to preyse aright!
But helpeth, ye that han conning and might,
Ye lovers, that can make of sentement;
In this cas oghte ye be diligent
To forthren me somwhat in my labour,
Whether ye ben with the leef or with the flour.
For wel I wot, that ye han her-biforn
Of making ropen, and lad awey the corn;
And I come after, glening here and there,
And am ful glad if I may finde an ere
Of any goodly word than ye han left.
And thogh it happen me rehercen eft
That ye han in your fresshe songes sayd,
For-bereth me, and beth nat evel apayd,
Sin that ye see I do hit in the honour
Of love, and eek in service of the flour,
Whom that I serve as I have wit or might.
She is the clernesse and the verray light,
That in this derke worlde me wynt and ledeth,
The herte in-with my sorowful brest yow dredeth,
And loveth so sore, that ye ben verrayly
The maistresse of my wit, and nothing I.
My word, my werk, is knit so in your bonde,
That, as an harpe obeyeth to the honde
And maketh hit soune after his fingerinye,
Right so mowe ye out of myn herte bringe
Swich vois, right as yow list, to laughe or pleyne.
Be ye my gyde and lady sovereyne;
As to myn erthly god, to yow I calle,
Bothe in this werke and in my sorwes alle.
But wherfor that I spak, to give credence
To olde stories, and doon hem reverence,
And that men mosten more thing beleve
Then men may seen at eye or elles preve?
That shal I seyn, whan that I see my tyme;
I may not al at ones speke in ryme.

Of many a story, or elles of many a geste,
As autours seyn; leveth hem if yow leste!

Whan passed was almost the month of May,
And I had romed, al the someres day,
The grene medew, of which that I yow tolde,
Upon the fresshe daysy to beholde,
And that the sonne out of the south gan weste,
And closed was the flour and goon to reste
For derknesse of the night, of which she dredde,
Hoom to myn hous ful swiftly I me spedde;
And, in a litel erber that I have,
Y-benched newe with turves fresshe y-grave,
I bad men shulde me my couche make;
For deyntee of the newe someres sake
I bad hem strowe floures on my bed.
Whan I was layd, and had myn eyen hed,
I fel a-slepe with-in an houre or two.
Me mette how I was in the medew tho,
And that I romed in that same gyse,
To seen that flour, as ye han herd devyse.
Fair was this medew, as thoughte me overal;
With floures swote embrowded was it al;

As for to speke of gomme, or erbe, or tree,
Comparisoun may noon y-maked be.
For hit surmounted pleynly alle odoures,
And eek of riche beaute alle floures.
Forgeten had the erthe his pore estat
Of winter, that him naked made and mat,
And with his swerd of cold so sore had greved.
Now had the atempre sonne al that releved,
And clothed him in grene al newe agayn.
The smale foules, of the seson fayn,

My besy gost, that thrusteth alwey newe
To seen this flour so yong, so fresh of hewe,
Constreyned me with so gledy desyr,
That in my herte I fele yit the fyr,
That made me to ryse er hit wer day —

And this was now the firste morwe of May —
With dredful herte and glad devocioun,
For to ben at the resureccioun
Of this flour, whan that it shuld unclose
Agayn the sonne, that roos as rede as rose,
That in the brest was of the beste that day,
That Agenores doghter ladde away.

And doun on knees anon-right I me sette,
And, as I coude, this fresshe flour I grette;
Kneling alwey, til hit unclosed was,
Upon the smale softe swote gras,

That was with floures swote embrouded al,
Of swich swetnesse and swich odour over-al,
That, for to speke of gomme, or herbe, or tree,
Comparisoun may noon y-maked be;
For hit surmounteth pleynly alle odoures,
And eek of riche beautee alle floures.
Forgeten had the erthe his pore estat
Of winter, that him naked made and mat,
And with his swerd of cold so sore greved;
Now hath the atempre sonne al that releved
That naked was, and clad hit new agayn.
The smale foules, of the seson fayn,

That from the panter and the net ben scaped,
Upon the fouler, that hem made a-whaped
In winter, and distroyed had hir brood,
In his despyt, hem thoughte hit did hem good
To singe of him, and in hir song despyse
The foule cherl that, for his covetyse,
Had hem betrayed with his sophistrye.
This was hir song — 'the fouler we defye!'
Somme songen [layes] on the braunches clere
Of love and [May], that Ioye hit was to here,
In worship and in preysing of hir make,

And of the newe blisful someres sake,

That songen, 'blissed be seynt Valentyn!

[For] at his day I chees yow to be myn,
With-oute repenting, myn herte swete!'
And therwith-al hir bekes gonnen mete.
[They dide honour and] humble obeisaunces,
And after diden other observaunces
Right [plesing] un-to love and to nature;
So ech of hem [doth wel] to creature.
This song to herkne I dide al myn entente,
For-why I mette I wiste what they mente.

That from the panter and the net ben scaped,
Upon the fouler, that hem made a-whaped
In winter, and distroyed had hir brood,
In his despyt, hem thoughte hit did hem good
To singe of him, and in hir song despyse
The foule cherl, that, for his covetyse,
Had hem betrayed with his sophistrye.
This was hir song — 'the fouler we defye,
And al his craft!' And somme songen clere
Layes of love, that Ioye hit was to here,

In worshipinge and preisinge of hir make.
And, for the newe blisful somers sake,
Upon the braunches ful of blosmes softe,
In hir delyt, they turned hem ful ofte,
And songen, 'blessed be seynt Valentyn!
For on his day I chees yow to be myn,
Withouten repenting, myn herte swete!'
And therwith-al hir bekes gonnen mete,
Yelding honour and humble obeisaunces
To love, and diden hir other observaunces
That longeth unto love and to nature;
Construeth that as yow list, I do no cure.
And tho that hadde doon unkindenesse —
As dooth the tydif, for new-fangelnesse —
Besoghte mercy of hir trespassinge,
And humblely songen hir repentinge,
And sworen on the blosmes to be trewe,
So that hir makes wolde upon hem rewe,
And at the laste maden hir acord.
Al founde they Daunger for a tyme a lord,
Yet Pitee, through his stronge gentil might,
Forgaf, and made Mercy passen Right,
Through innocence and ruled curtesye.
But I ne clepe nat innocence folye,
Ne fals pitee, for 'vertu is the mene,'
As Etik saith, in swich maner I mene.
And thus thise foules, voide of al malyce,
Acordeden to love, and laften vyce
Of hate, and songen alle of oon acord,
'Welcome, somer, our governour and lord!'

And Zephirus and Flora gentilly
Yaf to the floures, softe and tenderly,
Hir swote breth, and made hem for to sprede,
As god and goddesse of the floury mede;
In which me thoghte I mighte, day by day,
Dwellen alwey, the Ioly month of May,
Withouten sleep, withouten mete or drinke.
A-doun ful softely I gan to sinke;
And, leninge on myn elbowe and my syde,
The longe day I shoop me for to abyde
For nothing elles, and I shal nat lye,
But for to loke upon the dayesye,
That wel by reson men hit calle may
The 'dayesye' or elles the 'ye of day,'
The emperice and flour of floures alle.
I pray to god that faire mot she falle,
And alle that loven flōures, for hir sake!
But natheles, ne wene nat that I make
In preysing of the flour agayn the leef,
No more than of the corn agayn the sheef:
For, as to me, nis lever noon ne lother;
I nam with-holden yit with never nother
Ne I not who serveth leef, ne who the flour;
Wel brouken they hir service or labour;
For this thing is al of another tonne,
Of olde story, er swich thing was begonne.
Whan that the sonne out of the south gan weste,
And that this flour gan close and goon to reste
For derknesse of the night, the which she dredde,
Hoom to myn hous ful swiftly I me spedde
To goon to reste, and erly for to ryse,
To seen this flour to sprede, as I devyse.
And, in a litel herber that I have,
That benched was on turves fresshe y-grave,
I bad men sholde me my couche make;
For deyntee of the newe someres sake,
I bad hem strawen floures on my bed.
When I was leyd, and had myn eyen hed,

Til at the laste a larke song above:
'I see,' quod she, 'the mighty god of love!
Lo! yond he cometh, I see his winges sprede!'
Tho gan I loken endelong the mede,
And saw him come, and in his hond a quene,
Clothed in ryal abite al of grene.
A fret of gold she hadde next hir heer,

And up-on that a whyt coroun she beer
With many floures, and I shal nat lye;
For al the world, right as the dayesye
I-coroned is with whyte leves lyte,
Swich were the floures of hir coroun whyte.
For of o perle fyn and oriental
Hir whyte coroun was y-maked al;
For which the whyte coroun, above the grene,
Made hir lyk a daysie for to sene,
Considered eek the fret of gold above.
Y-clothed was this mighty god of love
Of silk, y-brouded ful of grene greves;
A garlond on his heed of rose-leves
Steked al with lilie floures newe;
But of his face I can nat seyn the hewe.

For sekirly his face shoon so brighte,
That with the gleem a-stoned was the sighte;
A furlong-wey I mighte him nat beholde.
But at the laste in hande I saw him holde

Two fyry dartes, as the gledes rede;
And aungellich his wenges gan he sprede.
And al be that men seyn that blind is he,
Al-gate me thoughte he mighte wel y-see;
For sternely on me he gan biholde,
So that his loking doth myn herte colde.

And by the hande he held the noble quene,
Corouned with whyte, and clothed al in grene,
So womanly, so benigne, and so meke,
That in this world, thogh that men wolde seke,
Half hir beautee shulde men nat finde

I fel on slepe in-with an houre or two;
Me mette how I lay in the medew tho,

To seen this flour that I so love and drede.
And from a-fer com walking in the mede
The god of love, and in his hande a quene;
And she was clad in real habit grene.
A fret of gold she hadde next hir heer,
And upon that a whyt coroun she beer
With florouns smale, and I shal nat lye;
For al the world, ryght as a dayesye
Y-corouned is with whyte leves lyte,
So were the florouns of hir coroun whyte;
For of o perle fyne, oriental,
Hir whyte coroun was y-maked al;
For which the whyte coroun, above the grene,
Made hir lyk a daysie for to sene,
Considered eek hir fret of gold above.
Y-clothed was this mighty god of love
In silke, enbrouded ful of grene greves,
In-with a fret of rede rose-leves,
The fresshest sin the world was first bigonne.
His gilte heer was corouned with a sonne,
In-stede of gold, for hevinesse and wighte;
Therwith me thoughte his face shoon so brighte

That wel unnethes mighte I him beholde;
And in his hande me thoughte I saugh him holde
Two fyry dartes, as the gledes rede;
And aungellyke his winges saugh I sprede.
And al be that men seyn that blind is he,
Al-gate me thoughte that he mighte see;

For sternely on me he gan biholde,
So that his loking doth myn herte colde.
And by the hande he held this noble quene,
Corouned with whyte, and clothed al in grene,
So womanly, so benigne, and so meke,
That in this world, thogh that men wolde seke,
Half hir beautee shulde men nat finde

In creature that formed is by kinde,
Hir name was Alceste the debonayre;
I prey to god that ever falle she fayre!
For ne hadde confort been of hir presence,
I had be deed, withouten any defence,
For drede of Loves wordes and his chere,
As, whan tyme is, her-after ye shal here.
Byhind this god of love, up-on this grene,
I saw cominge of ladyës nyntene
In ryal abite, a ful esy pas,
And after hem com of wemen swich a tras
That, sin that god Adam made of erthe,
The thredde part of wemen, ne the ferthe,
Ne wende I nat by possibilitee
Hadden ever in this world y-be;
And trewe of love thise wemen were echoon.
Now whether was that a wonder thing or noon,
That, right anoon as that they gonne espye
This flour, which that I clepe the dayesye,
Ful sodeinly they stinten alle at-ones,
And kneled adoun, as it were for the nones.
And after that they wenten in compas,
Daunsinge aboute this flour an esy pas,
And songen, as it were in carole-wyse,
This balade, which that I shal yow devyse.

BALADE.

Hyd, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere;
Ester, ley thou thy meknesse al a-doun;
Hyd, Ionathas, al thy frendly manere;
Penalopee, and Marcia Catoun,
Mak of your wyfhod no comparisoun;
Hyde ye your beautes, Isoude and Eleyne,
Alceste is here, that al that may desteyne.

Thy faire body, lat hit nat appere,
Lavyne; and thou, Lucresse of Rome toun,
And Polixene, that boghte love so dere,
Eek Cleopatre, with al thy passioun,

In creature that formed is by kinde.

And therfor may I seyn, as thinketh me,
This song, in preysing of this lady fre.

BALADE.

Hyd, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere;
Ester, ley thou thy meknesse al a-doun;
Hyd, Ionathas, al thy frendly manere;
Penalopee, and Marcia Catoun,
Mak of your wyfhod no comparisoun;
Hyde ye your beautes, Isoude and Eleyne,

My lady cometh, that al this may desteyne.

Thy faire body, lat hit nat appere,
Lavyne; and thou, Lucresse of Rome toun,
And Polixene, that boghten love so dere,
And Cleopatre, with al thy passioun,

Hyde ye your trouthe in love and your renoun;
And thou, Tisbe, that hast for love swich peyne:
Alceste is here, that al that may desteyne.

Herro, Dido, Laudomia, alle in-fere,
Eek Phyllis, hanging for thy Demophoun,
And Canace, espyed by thy chere,
Ysiphile, betrayed with Jasoun,
Mak of your trouthe in love no bost ne soun;
Nor Ypermistre or Adriane, ne pleyne;
Alceste is here, that al that may desteyne.

Whan that this balade al y-songen was,

Hyde ye your trouthe of love and your renoun;
And thou, Tisbe, that hast of love swich peyne;
My lady cometh, that al this may desteyne.

Herro, Dido, Laudomia, alle y-fere,
And Phyllis, hanging for thy Demophoun,
And Canace, espyed by thy chere,
Ysiphile, betraysed with Jasoun,
Maketh of your trouthe neyther boost ne soun;
Nor Ypermistre or Adriane, ye tweyne;
My lady cometh, that al this may desteyne.

This balade may ful wel y-songen be,
As I have seyd erst, by my lady free;
For certeynly, alle these mow nat suffyse
To apperen with my lady in no wyse.
For as the sonne wol the fyr disteyne,
So passeth al my lady sovereyne,
That is so good, so fair, so debonaire;
I prey to god that ever falle hir faire!
For, nadde comfort been of hir presence,
I had ben deed, withouten any defence,
For drede of Loves wordes and his chere;
As, when tyme is, her-after ye shal here.
Behind this god of love, upon the grene,
I saugh cominge of ladyës nyntene
In real habit, a ful esy paas;
And after hem com of women swich a traas,
That, sin that god Adam had mad of erthe,
The thridde part of mankynd, or the ferthe,
Ne wende I nat by possibilitee,
Had ever in this wyde worlde y-be;
And trewe of love thise women were echoon.
Now whether was that a wonder thing or noon,
That, right anoon as that they gonne espye
This flour, which that I clepe the dayesye,
Ful sodeinly they stinten alle at ones,
And kneled doun, as it were for the nones,

Upon the softe and swote grene gras

They setten hem ful softely adoun,
By ordre alle in compas, alle enveroun.
First sat the god of love, and than this quene
With the whyte coroun, clad in grene;
And sithen al the remenant by and by,
As they were of degree, ful curteisly;
Ne nat a word was spoken in the place
The mountance of a furlong-wey of space.
I, lening faste by under a bente,
Abood, to knowen what this peple mente,
As stille as any stoon; til at the laste,

The god of love on me his eye caste,
And seyde, 'who resteth ther?' and I answerde
Un-to his axing, whan that I him herde,
And seyde, 'sir, hit am I'; and cam him neer,
And salued him. Quod he, 'what dostow heer
In my presence, and that so boldely?
For it were better worthy, trewely,
A werm to comen in my sight than thou.'

'And why, sir,' quod I, 'and hit lyke yow?'
'For thou,' quod he, 'art ther-to nothing able.
My servaunts been alle wyse and honourable.
Thou art my mortal fo, and me warreyest,

And of myne olde servaunts thou misseyest,
And hinderest hem with thy translacioun,
And lettest folk to han devocioun
To serven me, and haldest hit folye
To troste on me. Thou mayst hit nat denye;

And songen with a vois, 'Hele and honour
To trouthe of womanhede, and to this flour
That berth our alder prys in figuringe!
Hir whyte coroun berth the witnessinge!'
And with that word, a-compas enviroun,
They setten hem ful softely adoun.

First sat the god of love, and sith his quene
With the whyte coroun, clad in grene;
And sithen al the remenant by and by,

As they were of estaat, ful curteisly;
Ne nat a word was spoken in the place
The mountance of a furlong-wey of space.
I kneling by this flour, in good entente
Abood, to knowen what this peple mente,
As stille as any stoon; til at the laste,
This god of love on me his eyen caste,
And seyde, 'who kneleth ther'? and I answerde
Unto his asking, whan that I hit herde,
And seyde, 'sir, hit am I'; and com him neer,
And salued him. Quod he, 'what dostow heer
So nigh myn owne flour, so boldely?
For it were better worthy, trewely,
A worm to neghen neer my flour than thou.'
'And why, sir,' quod I, 'and hit lyke yow?'
'For thou,' quod he, 'art ther-to nothing able.
Hit is my relik, digne and delytable,

And thou my fo, and al my folk werreyest,
And of myn olde servaunts thou misseyest,
And hindrest hem, with thy translacioun,
And lettest folk from hir devocioun
To serve me, and holdest hit folye
To serve Love. Thou mayst hit nat denye;

For in pleyn text, hit nedeth nat to glose,
Thou hast translated the Romauns of the Rose,
That is an heresye ageyns my lawe,
And makest wyse folk fro me withdrawe.
And thinkest in thy wit, that is ful cool,
That he nis but a verray propre fool
That loveth paramours, to harde and hote.
Wel wot I ther-by thou beginnest dote
As olde foles, whan hir spirit fayleth;
Than blame they folk, and wite nat what hem ayleth.
Hast thou nat mad in English eek the book
How that Crisseyde Troilus forsook,

In shewinge how that wemen han don mis?
But natheles, answere me now to this,
Why noldest thou as wel han seyd goodnesse
Of wemen, as thou hast seyd wikkednesse?
Was ther no good matere in thy minde,
Ne in alle thy bokes coudest thou nat finde
Sum story of wemen that were goode and trewe?
Yis! god wot, sixty bokes olde and newe
Hast thou thy-self, alle fulle of stories grete,
That bothe Romains and eek Grekes trete
Of sundry wemen, which lyf that they ladde,
And ever an hundred gode ageyn oon badde.
This knoweth god, and alle clerkes eke,
That usen swiche materes for to seke.
What seith Valerie, Titus, or Claudian?
What seith Ierome ageyns Iovinian?
How clene maydens, and how trewe wyves,
How stedfast widwes during al hir lyves,
Telleth Ierome; and that nat of a fewe,
But, I dar seyn, an hundred on a rewe;
That hit is pitee for to rede, and routhe,
The wo that they enduren for hir trouthe.
For to hir love were they so trewe,
That, rather than they wolde take a newe,

For in pleyn text, with-outen nede of glose,
Thou hast translated the Romaunce of the Rose,
That is an heresye ageyns my lawe,
And makest wyse folk fro me withdrawe.

And of Criseyde thou hast seyd as thee liste,
That maketh men to wommen lasse triste,
That ben as trewe as ever was any steel.
Of thyn answere avyse thee right weel;

They chosen to be dede in sundry wyse,
And deyden, as the story wol devyse;
And some were brend, and some were cut the hals,
And some dreynt, for they wolden nat be fals.
For alle keped they hir maydenhed,
Or elles wedlok, or hir widwehed.
And this thing was nat kept for holinesse,
But al for verray vertu and clennesse,
And for men shulde sette on hem no lak;
And yit they weren hethen, al the pak,
That were so sore adrad of alle shame.
These olde wemen kepte so hir name,
That in this world I trow men shal nat finde
A man that coude be so trewe and kinde,
As was the leste woman in that tyde.
What seith also the epistels of Ovyde
Of trewe wyves, and of hir labour?
What Vincent, in his Storial Mirour?
Eek al the world of autours maystow here,
Cristen and hethen, trete of swich matere;
It nedeth nat alday thus for tendyte.
But yit I sey, what eyleth thee to wryte
The draf of stories, and forgo the corn?
By seint Venus, of whom that I was born,
Although [that] thou reneyed hast my lay,
As othere olde foles many a day,

Thou shalt repente hit, that hit shal be sene!'
Than spak Alceste, the worthieste quene,
And seyde, 'god, right of your curtesye,
Ye moten herknen if he can replye
Ageyns these points that ye han to him meved;
A god ne sholde nat be thus agreved,
But of his deitee he shal be stable,
And therto rightful and eek merciable.
He shal nat rightfully his yre wreke
Or he have herd the tother party speke.
Al ne is nat gospel that is to yow pleyned;
The god of love herth many a tale y-feyned.

For in your court is many a losengeour,
And many a queynte totelere accusour,

For, thogh that thou reneyed hast my lay,
As other wrecches han doon many a day,
By seynt Venus, that my moder is,
If that thou live, thou shalt repenten this
So cruelly, that hit shal wel be sene!' 340

Tho spak this lady, clothed al in grene,

And seyde, 'god, right of your curtesye,
Ye moten herknen if he can replye
Agayns al this that ye han to him meved;

A god ne sholde nat be thus agreved, 345
But of his deitee he shall be stable,
And therto gracious and merciable.
And if ye nere a god, that knowen al,
Than mighte hit be, as I yow tellen shal;
This man to you may falsly been accused, 350
Ther as by right him oghte been excused.
For in your court is many a losengeour,
And many a queynte totelere accusour,

That tabouren in your eres many a thing
For hate, or for Ielous imagining,
And for to han with yow som daliaunce.
Envye (I prey to god yeve hir mischaunce!)
Is lavender in the grete court alway.
For she ne parteth, neither night ne day,
Out of the hous of Cesar; thus seith Dante;
Who-so that goth, alwey she moot [nat] wante.
This man to yow may wrongly been accused,
Ther as by right him oghte been excused.
Or elles, sir, for that this man is nyce,
He may translate a thing in no malyce,
But for he useth bokes for to make,
And takth non heed of what matere he take;
Therfor he wroot the Rose and eek Crisseyde
Of innocence, and niste what he seyde;
Or him was boden make thilke tweye
Of som persone, and durste hit nat withseye;
For he hath writen many a book er this.
He ne hath nat doon so grevously amis
To translaten that olde clerkes wryten,
As thogh that he of malice wolde endyten
Despyt of love, and hadde him-self y-wroght.
This shulde a rightwys lord han in his thoght,
And nat be lyk tiraunts of Lumbardye,
That usen wilfulhed and tirannye,
For he that king or lord is naturel,
Him oghte nat be tiraunt ne cruel,
As is a fermour, to doon the harm he can.
He moste thinke hit is his lige man,
And that him oweth, of verray duetee,
Shewen his peple pleyn benignitee,
And wel to here hir excusaciouns,
And hir compleyntes and peticiouns,
In duewe tyme, whan they shal hit profre.
This is the sentence of the philosophre:
A king to kepe his liges in Iustyce;
With-outen doute, that is his offyce.
And therto is a king ful depe y-sworn,
Ful many an hundred winter heer-biforn;
And for to kepe his lordes hir degree,
As hit is right and skilful that they be

That tabouren in your eres many a soun,
Right after hir imaginacioun,
To have your daliance, and for envye;
These been the causes, and I shall nat lye.
Envye is lavender of the court alway;
For she ne parteth, neither night ne day,
Out of the hous of Cesar; thus seith Dante;
Who-so that goth, algate she wol nat wante.

And eek, paraunter, for this man is nyce,
He mighte doon hit, gessing no malyce,
But for he useth thinges for to make;
Him rekketh noght of what matere he take;

Or him was boden maken thilke tweye
Of som persone, and durste hit nat withseye;
Or him repenteth utterly of this.
He ne hath nat doon so grevously amis
To translaten that olde clerkes wryten,
As thogh that he of malice wolde endyten
Despyt of love, and had him-self hit wroght.
This shulde a rightwys lord have in his thoght,
And nat be lyk tiraunts of Lumbardye,
Than han no reward but at tirannye.
For he that king or lord is naturel,
Him oghte nat be tiraunt ne cruel,
As is a fermour, to doon the harm he can.
He moste thinke hit is his lige man,

And is his tresour, and his gold in cofre.
This is the sentence of the philosophre:
A king to kepe his liges in Iustyce;
With-outen doute, that is his offyce.

Al wol he kepe his lordes hir degree,
As hit is right and skilful that they be

Enhaunced and honoured, and most dere —
For they ben half-goddes in this world here —
This shal he doon, bothe to pore [and] riche,
Al be that here stat be nat a-liche,
And han of pore folk compassioun.
For lo, the gentil kind of the lioun!
For whan a flye offendeth him or byteth,
He with his tayl awey the flye smyteth
Al esily; for, of his genterye,
Him deyneth nat to wreke him on a flye,
As doth a curre or elles another beste.
In noble corage oghte been areste,
And weyen every thing by equitee,
And ever han reward to his owen degree.
For, sir, hit is no maystrie for a lord
To dampne a man with-oute answere or word;
And, for a lord, that is ful foul to use.
And if-so be he may him nat excuse,
[But] axeth mercy with a sorweful herte,
And profreth him, right in his bare sherte,
To been right at your owne Iugement,
Than oghte a god, by short avysement,
Considre his owne honour and his trespas.

For sith no cause of deeth lyth in this cas,
Yow oghte been the lighter merciable;
Leteth your yre, and beth somwhat tretable!
The man hath served yow of his conning,
And forthered your lawe with his making.
Whyl he was yong, he kepte your estat;
I not wher he be now a renegat.
But well I wot, with that he can endyte,
He hath maked lewed folk delyte
To serve you, in preysing of your name.
He made the book that hight the Hous of Fame,
And eek the Deeth of Blaunche the Duchesse,
And the Parlement of Foules, as I gesse,
And al the love of Palamon and Arcyte
Of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen lyte;
And many an ympne for your halydayes,
That highten Balades, Roundels, Virelayes;

Enhaunced and honoured, and most dere —
For they ben half-goddes in this world here —
Yit mot he doon bothe right, to pore and riche,
Al be that hir estat be nat y-liche,
And han of pore folk compassioun.
For lo, the gentil kynd of the leoun!
For whan a flye offendeth him or byteth,
He with his tayl awey the flye smyteth
Al esily; for, of his genterye,
Him deyneth nat to wreke him on a flye,
As doth a curre or elles another beste.
In noble corage oghte been areste,
And weyen every thing by equitee,
And ever han reward to his owen degree.
For, sir, hit is no maystrie for a lord
To dampne a man with-oute answere of word;
And, for a lord, that is ful foul to use.
And if so be he may him nat excuse,
But asketh mercy with a dredful herte,

And profreth him, right in his bare sherte,
To been right at your owne Iugement,
Than oghte a god, by short avysement,
Considre his owne honour and his trespas.
For sith no cause of deeth lyth in this cas,
Yow oghte been the lighter merciable;
Leteth your yre, and beth somwhat tretable!
The man hath served yow of his conning,
And forthred wel your lawe in his making.

'Al be hit that he can nat well endyte,
Yet hath he maked lewed folk delyte
To serve you, in preysing of your name.
He made the book that hight the Hous of Fame,
And eek the Deeth of Blaunche the Duchesse,
And the Parlement of Foules, as I gesse,
And al the love of Palamon and Arcyte
Of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen lyte;
And many an ympne for your halydayes,
That highten Balades, Roundels, Virelayes;

And for to speke of other besinesse,
He hath in prose translated Boëce;
And of the Wreched Engendring of Mankinde,
As man may in pope Innocent y-finde;
And mad the Lyf also of seynt Cecyle;
He made also, goon sithen a greet whyl,
Origenes upon the Maudeleyne;
Him oghte now to have the lesse peyne;
He hath mad many a lay and many a thing.
'Now as ye been a god, and eek a king,
I, your Alceste, whylom quene of Trace,
I axe yow this man, right of your grace,
That ye him never hurte in al his lyve;
And he shal sweren yow, and that as blyve,
He shal no more agilten in this wyse;
But he shal maken, as ye wil devyse,
Of wemen trewe in lovinge al hir lyve,
Wher-so ye wil, of maiden or of wyve,
And forthren yow, as muche as he misseyde
Or in the Rose or elles in Crisseyde.'
The god of love answerde hir thus anoon,
'Madame,' quod he, 'hit is so long agoon
That I yow knew so charitable and trewe,
That never yit, sith that the world was newe,
To me ne fond I better noon than ye.
That, if that I wol save my degree,
I may ne wol nat warne your requeste;
Al lyth in yow, doth with him what yow leste
And al foryeve, with-outen lenger space;
For who-so yeveth a yift, or doth a grace,
Do hit by tyme, his thank is wel the more;
And demeth ye what he shal do therfore.
Go thanke now my lady heer,' quod he.
I roos, and doun I sette me on my knee,
And seyde thus: 'Madame, the god above
Foryelde yow, that ye the god of love
Han maked me his wrathe to foryive;
And yeve me grace so long for to live,
That I may knowe soothly what ye be
Than han me holpen, and put in swich degrée.

And, for to speke of other holynesse,
He hath in prose translated Boëce,

And mad the Lyf also of seynt Cecyle;
He made also, goon sithen a greet whyl,
Origenes upon the Maudeleyne;
Him oghte now to have the lesse peyne;
He hath mad many a lay and many a thing.
'Now as ye been a god, and eek a king,
I, your Alceste, whylom quene of Trace,
I aske yow this man, right of your grace,
That ye him never hurte in al his lyve;
And he shal sweren yow, and that as blyve,
He shal no more agilten in this wyse;
But he shal maken, as ye wil devyse,
Of wommen trewe in lovinge al hir lyve,
Wher-so ye wil, of maiden or of wyve,
And forthren yow, as muche as he misseyde
Or in the Rose or elles in Creseyde.'
The god of love answerde hir thus anoon,
'Madame,' quod he, 'hit is so long agoon
That I yow knew so charitable and trewe,
That niver yit, sith that the world was newe,
To me ne fond I better noon than ye.
If that I wolde save my degree,
I may ne wol nat werne your requeste;
Al lyth in yow, doth with him as yow leste.
I al foryeve, with-outen lenger space;
For who-so yeveth a yift, or doth a grace,
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Go thanke now my lady heer,' quod he.
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Foryelde yow, that ye the god of love
Han maked me his wrathe to foryive;
And yeve me grace so long for to live,
That I may knowe soothly what ye be
That han me holpe and put in this degree.

But trewely I wende, as in this cas,
Naught have agilt, ne doon to love trespas.
Forwhy a trewe man, with-outen drede,
Hath nat to parten with a theves dede;
Ne a trewe lover oghte me nat blame,
Thogh that I speke a fals lover som shame.
They oghte rather with me for to holde,
For that I of Creseyde wroot or tolde,
Or of the Rose; what-so myn auctour mente,
Algate, god wot, hit was myn entente
To forthren trouthe in love and hit cheryce;
And to be war fro falsnesse and fro vyce
By swich ensample; this was my meninge.'
And she answerde, 'lat be thyn arguinge;
For Love ne wol nat countrepleted be
In right ne wrong; and lerne this at me!
Thou hast thy grace, and hold thee right ther-to.
Now wol I seyn what penance thou shalt do
For thy trespas, and understond hit here:
Thou shalt, whyl that thou livest, yeer by yere
The moste party of thy lyve spende
In making of a glorious Legende
Of Gode Wemen, maidenes and wyves,
That were trewe in lovinge al hir lyves;
And telle of false men that hem bitrayen,
That al hir lyf ne doon nat but assayen
How many wemen they may doon a shame;
For in your world that is now holden game.
And thogh thee lesteth nat a lover be,
Spek wel of love; this penance yeve I thee.
And to the god of love I shal so preye,
That he shal charge his servants, by any weye,
To forthren thee, and wel thy labour quyte;
Go now thy wey, thy penance is but lyte.'

But trewely I wende, as in this cas,
Naught have agilt, ne doon to love trespas.
Forwhy a trewe man, with-outen drede;
Hath nat to parten with a theves dede;
Ne a trewe lover oghte me nat blame,
Thogh that I speke a fals lover som shame.
They oghte rather with me for to holde,
For that I of Creseyde wroot or tolde,
Or of the Rose; what-so myn auctour mente,
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Now wol I seyn what penance thou shalt do
For thy trespas, and understond hit here:
Thou shalt, whyl that thou livest, yeer by yere,
The moste party of thy tyme spende
In making of a glorious Legende
Of Gode Wommen, maidenes and wyves,
That weren trewe in lovinge al hir lyves;
And telle of false men that hem bitrayen,
That al hir lyf ne doon nat but assayen
How many wommen they may doon a shame;
For in your world that is now holde a game.
And thogh thee lyke nat a lover be,
Spek wel of love; this penance yive I thee.
And to the god of love I shal so preye,
That he shal charge his servants, by any weye,
To forthren thee, and wel thy labour quyte;
Go now thy wey, this penance is but lyte.
And whan this book is maad, yive hit the quene

The god of love gan smyle, and than he seyde,
'Wostow,' quod he, 'wher this be wyf or mayde,
Or quene, or countesse, or of what degree,
That hath so litel penance yeven thee,
That hast deserved sorer for to smerte?
But pitee renneth sone in gentil herte;
That mayst thou seen, she kytheth what she is.'
And I answerde, 'nay, sir, so have I blis,
No more but that I see wel she is good.'
'That is a trewe tale, by myn hood,'
Quod Love, 'and that thou knowest wel, pardee,
If hit be so that thou avyse thee.
Hastow nat in a book, lyth in thy cheste,
The grete goodnesse of the quene Alceste,
That turned was into a dayesye:
She that for hir husbonde chees to dye,
And eek to goon to helle, rather than he,
And Ercules rescued hir, pardee,
And broghte hir out of helle agayn to blis?'
And I answerde ageyn, and seyde, 'yis,
Now knowe I hir! And is this good Alceste,
The dayesye, and myn owne hertes reste?
Now fele I wel the goodnesse of this wyf,
That bothe after hir deeth, and in hir lyf,
Hir grete bountee doubleth hir renoun!
Wel hath she quit me myn affeccioun
That I have to hir flour, the dayesye!
No wonder is thogh Iove hir stellifye,
As telleth Agaton, for hir goodnesse!
Hir whyte coroun berth of hit witnesse;

For also many vertues hadde she,
As smale floures in hir coroun be.
In remembraunce of hir and in honour,

Cibella made the dayesy and the flour
Y-coroned al with whyt, as men may see;
And Mars yaf to hir coroun reed, pardee,

On my behalfe, at Eltham, or at Shene.'
The god of love gan smyle, and than he seyde,
'Wostow,' quod he, 'wher this be wyf or mayde,
Or quene, or countesse, or of what degree,
That hath so litel penance yiven thee,
That hast deserved sorer for to smerte?
But pitee renneth sone in gentil herte;
That maystow seen, she kytheth what she is.'
And I answerde, 'nay, sir, so have I blis,
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The grete goodnesse of the quene Alceste,
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Now knowe I hir! And is this good Alceste,
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For also many vertues hadde she,
As smale floures in hir coroun be.
In remembraunce of hir and in honour,
Cibella made the dayesy and the flour
Y-coroned al with whyt, as men may see;
And Mars yaf to hir coroun reed, pardee,

In stede of rubies, set among the whyte.'
Therwith this quene wex reed for shame a lyte,
Whan she was preysed so in hir presence.
Than seyde Love, 'a ful gret negligence
Was hit to thee, to write unstedfastnesse
Of women, sith thou knowest hir goodnesse
By preef, and eek by stories heer-biforn;
Let be the chaf, and wryt wel of the corn.
Why noldest thou han writen of Alceste,
And leten Criseide been a-slepe and reste?
For of Alceste shulde thy wryting be,
Sin that thou wost that kalender is she
Of goodnesse, for she taughte of fyn lovinge,
And namely of wyfhood the livinge,
And alle the boundes that she oghte kepe;
Thy litel wit was thilke tyme a-slepe.
But now I charge thee, upon thy lyf,
That in thy Legend thou make of this wyf,
Whan thou hast othere smale mad before;
And fare now wel, I charge thee no more.

In stede of rubies, set among the whyte.'
Therwith this quene wex reed for shame a lyte,
Whan she was preysed so in hir presence.
Than seyde Love, 'a ful gret negligence
Was hit to thee, that ilke tyme thou made
"Hyd, Absolon, thy tresses," in balade,
That thou forgete hir in thy song to sette,
Sin that thou art so gretly in hir dette,

And wost so wel, that kalender is she
To any woman that wol lover be.
For she taughte al the craft of fyn lovinge,
And namely of wyfhood the livinge,
And alle the boundes that she oghte kepe;
Thy litel wit was thilke tyme a-slepe.
But now I charge thee, upon thy lyf,
That in thy Legend thou make of this wyf,
Whan thou hast other smale y-maad before;
And fare now wel, I charge thee no more.
'But er I go, thus muche I wol thee telle,
Ne shal no trewe lover come in helle.
Thise other ladies sittinge here arowe
Ben in thy balade, if thou canst hem knowe,
And in thy bokes alle thou shalt hem finde;
Have hem now in thy Legend alle in minde,
I mene of hem that been in thy knowinge.
For heer ben twenty thousand mo sittinge
Than thou knowest, that been good wommen alle
And trewe of love, for aught that may befalle;
Make the metres of hem as thee leste.
I mot gon hoom, the sonne draweth weste,

'At Cleopatre I wol that thou beginne;
And so forth; and my love so shalt thou winne.'

And with that word of sleep I gan a-awake,
And right thus on my Legend gan I make.

To Paradys, with al this companye;
And serve alwey the fresshe dayesye.
'At Cleopatre I wol that thou beginne;
And so forth; and my love so shalt thou winne.
For lat see now what man that lover be,
Wol doon so strong a peyne for love as she.
I wot wel that thou mayst nat al hit ryme,
That swiche lovers diden in hir tyme;
It were to long to reden and to here;
Suffyceth me, thou make in this manere,
That thou reherce of al hir lyf the grete,
After thise olde auctours listen to trete.
For who-so shal so many a storie telle,
Sey shortly, or he shal to longe dwelle.
And with that word my bokes gan I take,
And right thus on my Legend gan I make.

Explicit prohemium.

I. THE LEGEND OF CLEOPATRA.

INCIPIT LEGENDA CLEOPATRIE, MARTIRIS, EGIPTI REGINE.

AFTER the deeth of Tholomee the king,
That al Egipte hadde in his governing,
Regned his quene Cleopataras;
Til on a tyme befel ther swiche a cas,
That out of Rome was sent a senatour,
For to conqueren regnes and honour
Unto the toun of Rome, as was usaunce,
To have the world unto her obeisaunce;
And, sooth to seye, Antonius was his name.
So fil hit, as Fortune him oghte a shame
Whan he was fallen in prosperitee,
Rebel unto the toun of Rome is he.
And over al this, the suster of Cesar,
He lafte hir falsly, er that she was war,
And wolde algates han another wyf;
For whiche he took with Rome and Cesar stryf.

Natheles, for-sooth, this ilke senatour
Was a ful worthy gentil werreyour,
And of his deeth hit was ful greet damage.
But love had broght this man in swiche a rage,
And him so narwe bounden in his las,
Al for the love of Cleopataras,
That al the world he sette at no value.
Him thoughte, nas to him no thing so due
As Cleopatras for to love and serve;
Him roghte nat in armes for to sterve
In the defence of hir, and of hir right.
This noble quene eek lovede so this knight,
Through his desert, and for his chivalrye;
As certeinly, but-if that bokes lye,
He was, of persone and of gentilesse,
And of discrecioun and hardinesse,
Worthy to any wight that liven may.
And she was fair as is the rose in May.

And, for to maken shortly is the beste,
She wex his wyf, and hadde him as hir leste.
The wedding and the feste to devyse,
To me, that have y-take swiche empryse
Of so many a storie for to make,
Hit were to long, lest that I sholde slake
Of thing that bereth more effect and charge;
For men may overlade a ship or barge;
And forthy to theffect than wol I skippe,
And al the remenant, I wol lete hit slippe.
Octovian, that wood was of this dede,
Shoop him an ost on Antony to lede
Al-outerly for his destruccioun,
With stoute Romains, cruel as leoun;
To ship they wente, and thus I let hem saile.
Antonius was war, and wol nat faile
To meten with thise Romains, if he may;
Took eek his reed, and bothe, upon a day,
His wyf and he, and al his ost, forth wente
To shippe anoon, no lenger they ne stente;
And in the see hit happed hem to mete —
Up goth the trompe — and for to shoute and shete,
And peynen hem to sette on with the sonne.
With grisly soun out goth the grete gonne,
And heterly they hurtlen al at ones,
And fro the top doun cometh the grete stones.
In goth the grapenel so ful of crokes
Among the ropes, and the shering-hokes.
In with the polax presseth he and he;
Behind the mast beginneth he to flee,
And out agayn, and dryveth him overborde;
He stingeth him upon his speres orde;
He rent the sail with hokes lyke a sythe;
He bringeth the cuppe, and biddeth hem be blythe;
He poureth pesen upon the hacches slider;
With pottes ful of lym they goon to-gider;
And thus the longe day in fight they spende
Til, at the laste, as every thing hath ende,
Antony is shent, and put him to the flighte,
And al his folk to-go, that best go mighte.
Fleeth eek the queen, with al her purpre sail,
For strokes, which that wente as thikke as hail;
No wonder was, she mighte hit nat endure.
And whan that Antony saw that aventure,
'Allas!' quod he, 'the day that I was born!
My worshipe in this day thus have I lorn!'
And for dispeyr out of his witte he sterte,
And roof him-self anoon through-out the herte
Er that he ferther wente out of the place.
His wyf, that coude of Cesar have no grace,
To Egipte is fled, for drede and for distresse;
But herkneth, ye that speke of kindenesse.
Ye men, that falsly sweren many an ooth
That ye wol dye, if that your love be wrooth,
Heer may ye seen of women whiche a trouthe!
This woful Cleopatre hath mad swich routhe
That ther nis tonge noon that may hit telle.
But on the morwe she wol no lenger dwelle,
But made hir subtil werkmen make a shryne
Of alle the rubies and the stones fyne
In al Egipte that she coude espye;
And putte ful the shryne of spycerye,
And leet the cors embaume; and forth she fette
This dede cors, and in the shryne hit shette.
And next the shryne a pit than doth she grave;
And alle the serpents that she mighte have,
She putte hem in that grave, and thus she seyde:
'Now love, to whom my sorweful herte obeyde
So ferforthly that, fro that blisful houre
That I yow swor to been al frely youre,

I mene yow, Antonius my knight! 684
That never waking, in the day or night,
Ye nere out of myn hertes remembraunce
For wele or wo, for carole or for daunce;
And in my-self this covenant made I tho,
That, right swich as ye felten, wele or wo,
As ferforth as hit in my power lay, 690
Unreprovable unto my wyfhood ay,
The same wolde I felen, lyf or deeth.
And thilke covenant, whyl me lasteth breeth,
I wol fulfille, and that shal wel be sene;
Was never unto hir love a trewer quene.'
And with that word, naked, with ful good herte, 696
Among the serpents in the pit she sterte,
And ther she chees to han hir buryinge.
Anoon the neddres gonne hir for to stinge,
And she hir deeth receyveth, with good chere, 700
For love of Antony, that was hir so dere: —
And this is storial sooth, hit is no fable.
Now, er I finde a man thus trewe and stable,
And wol for love his deeth so freely take,
I pray god lat our hedes never ake! 705

Explicit Legenda Cleopatrie, martiris.

II. THE LEGEND OF THISBE OF BABYLON.

INCIPIT LEGENDA TESBE BABILONIE, MARTIRIS.

AT Babiloine whylom fil it thus,
The whiche toun the queen Semiramus
Leet dichen al about, and walles make
Ful hye, of harde tyles wel y-bake.
Ther weren dwellinge in this noble toun
Two lordes, which that were of greet renoun, 711
And woneden so nigh, upon a grene,
That ther nas but a stoon-wal hem bitwene,
As ofte in grete tounes is the wone.
And sooth to seyn, that o man hadde a sone, 715
Of al that londe oon of the lustieste.
That other hadde a doghter, the faireste,
That estward in the world was tho dwellinge.
The name of everich gan to other springe
By wommen, that were neighebores aboute. 720
For in that contree yit, withouten doute,
Maidens been y-kept, for Ielosye,
Ful streite, lest they diden som folye.
This yonge man was cleped Piramus,
And Tisbe hight the maid, Naso seith thus; 725
And thus by report was hir name y-shove
That, as they wexe in age, wex hir love;
And certein, as by reson of hir age,
Ther mighte have been bitwix hem mariage,
But that hir fadres nolde hit nat assente;
And bothe in love y-lyke sore they brente, 731
That noon of alle hir frendes mighte hit lette
But prively somtyme yit they mette
By sleighte, and speken som of hir desyr;
As, wry the gleed, and hotter is the fyr;
Forbede a love, and it is ten so wood. 736
This wal, which that bitwix hem bothe stood,
Was cloven a-two, right fro the toppe adoun,
Of olde tyme of his fundacioun;
But yit this clifte was so narwe and lyte,
It nas nat sene, dere y-nogh a myte. 741
But what is that, that love can nat espye?
Ye lovers two, if that I shal nat lye,
Ye founden first this litel narwe clifte;
And, with a soun as softe as any shrifte,
They lete hir wordes through the clifte pace, 746
And tolden, whyl that they stode in the place,
Al hir compleynt of love, and al hir wo,
At every tyme whan they dorste so.
Upon that o syde of the wal stood he,
And on that other syde stood Tisbe, 751
The swote soun of other to receyve,
And thus hir wardeins wolde they deceyve.
And every day this wal they wolde threte,

And wisshe to god, that it were doun y-bete.
Thus wolde they seyn — 'allas! thou wikked wal,
Through thyn envye thou us lettest al!
Why nilt thou cleve, or fallen al a-two?
Or, at the leste, but thou woldest so,
Yit woldestow but ones lete us mete,
Or ones that we mighte kissen swete,
Than were we covered of our cares colde.
But natheles, yit be we to thee holde
In as muche as thou suffrest for to goon
Our wordes through thy lyme and eek thy stoon.
Yit oghte we with thee ben wel apayd.'
And whan thise ydel wordes weren sayd,
The colde wal they wolden kisse of stoon,
And take hir leve, and forth they wolden goon.
And this was gladly in the even-tyde
Or wonder erly, lest men hit espyde;
And longe tyme they wroghte in this manere
Til on a day, whan Phebus gan to clere,
Aurora with the stremes of hir hete
Had dryed up the dew of herbes wete;
Unto this clifte, as it was wont to be,
Com Pyramus, and after com Tisbe,
And plighten trouthe fully in hir fey
That ilke same night to stele awey,
And to begyle hir wardeins everichoon,
And forth out of the citee for to goon;
And, for the feldes been so brode and wyde,
For to mete in o place at o tyde,
They sette mark hir meting sholde be
Ther king Ninus was graven, under a tree;
For olde payens that ydoles heried
Useden tho in feldes to ben beried;
And faste by this grave was a welle.
And, shortly of this tale for to telle,
This covenant was affermed wonder faste;
And longe hem thoughte that the sonne laste,
That hit nere goon under the see adoun.
This Tisbe hath so greet affeccioun
And so greet lyking Piramus to see,
That, whan she seigh her tyme mighte be,
At night she stal awey ful prively
With her face y-wimpled subtilly;
For alle her frendes — for to save her trouthe —
She hath for-sake; allas! and that is routhe
That ever woman wolde be so trewe
To trusten man, but she the bet him knewe!
And to the tree she goth a ful good pas,
For love made her so hardy in this cas;
And by the welle adoun she gan her dresse.
Allas! than comth a wilde leonesse
Out of the wode, withouten more areste,
With blody mouthe, of strangling of a beste,
To drinken of the welle, ther as she sat;
And, whan that Tisbe had espyed that,
She rist her up, with a ful drery herte,
And in a cave with dredful foot she sterte,
For by the mone she seigh hit wel withalle.
And, as she ran, her wimpel leet she falle,
And took noon heed, so sore she was a-whaped.
And eek so glad of that she was escaped;
And thus she sit, and darketh wonder stille.
Whan that this leonesse hath dronke her fille,
Aboute the welle gan she for to winde,
And right anoon the wimpel gan she finde,
And with her blody mouth hit al torente.
Whan this was doon, no lenger she ne stente,
But to the wode her wey than hath she nome.
And, at the laste, this Piramus is come,
But al to longe, allas! at hoom was he.
The mone shoon, men mighte wel y-see,
And in his weye, as that he com ful faste,
His eyen to the grounde adoun he caste,
And in the sonde, as he beheld adoun,
He seigh the steppes brode of a leoun,
And in his herte he sodeinly agroos,
And pale he wex, therwith his heer aroos,
And neer he com, and fond the wimpel torn.
'Allas!' quod he, 'the day that I was born!
This o night wol us lovers bothe slee!

How sholde I axen mercy of Tisbe
Whan I am he that have yow slain, allas!
My bidding hath yow slain, as in this cas.
Allas! to bidde a woman goon by nighte
In place ther as peril fallen mighte,
And I so slow! allas, I ne hadde be
Here in this place a furlong-wey or ye!
Now what leoun that be in this foreste,
My body mote he renden, or what beste
That wilde is, gnawen mote he now myn herte!'
And with that worde he to the wimpel sterte,
And kiste hit ofte, and weep on hit ful sore,
And seide, 'wimpel, allas! ther nis no more
But thou shalt fele as wel the blood of me
As thou hast felt the bleding of Tisbe!'
And with that werde he smoot him to the herte.
The blood out of the wounde as brode sterte
As water, whan the conduit broken is.
Now Tisbe, which that wiste nat of this,
But sitting in her drede, she thoghte thus,
'If hit so falle that my Piramus
Be comen hider, and may me nat y-finde,
He may me holden fals and eek unkinde.'
And out she comth, and after him gan espyen
Bothe with her herte and with her yën,
And thoghte, 'I wol him tellen of my drede
Bothe of the leonesse and al my dede.'
And at the laste her love than hath she founde
Beting with his heles on the grounde,
Al blody, and therwith-al a-bak she sterte,
And lyke the wawes quappe gan her herte,
And pale as box she wex, and in a throwe
Avysed her, and gan him wel to knowe,
That hit was Piramus, her herte dere.
Who could wryte whiche a deedly chere
Hath Tisbe now, and how her heer she rente,
And how she gan her-selve to turmente,
And how she lyth and swowneth on the grounde,
And how she weep of teres ful his wounde,
How medeleth she his blood with her compleynte,
And with his blood her-selven gan she peynte;
How clippeth she the dede cors, allas?
How doth this woful Tisbe in this cas!
How kisseth she his frosty mouth so cold!
'Who hath doon this, and who hath been so bold
To sleen my leef? O spek, my Piramus!
I am thy Tisbe, that thee calleth thus!'
And therwith-al she lifteth up his heed.
This woful man, that was nat fully deed,
Whan that he herde the name of Tisbe cryen,
On her he caste his hevy deedly yën
And doun again, and yeldeth up the gost.
Tisbe rist up, withouten noise or bost,
And seigh her wimpel, and his empty shethe,
And eek his swerd, that him hath doon to dethe;
Than spak she thus: 'My woful hand,' quod she,
'Is strong y-nogh in swiche a werk to me;
For love shal yive me strengthe and hardinesse
To make my wounde large y-nogh, I gesse.
I wol thee folwen deed, and I wol be
Felawe and cause eek of thy deeth,' quod she.
'And thogh that nothing save the deeth only
Mighte thee fro me departe trewely,
Thou shalt no more departe now fro me
Than fro the deeth, for I wol go with thee!
'And now, ye wrecched Ielous fadres oure,
We, that weren whylom children youre,
We prayen yow, withouten more envye,
That in o grave y-fere we moten lye,

Sin love hath brought us to this pitous ende!
And rightwis god to every lover sende,
That loveth trewely, more prosperitee
Than ever hadde Piramus and Tisbe!
And lat no gentil woman her assure
To putten her in swiche an aventure.
But god forbede but a woman can
Been as trewe and loving as a man!
And, for my part, I shal anoon it kythe!'
And, with that worde, his swerd she took as swythe,
That warm was of her loves blood and hoot,
And to the herte she her-selven smoot.
And thus ar Tisbe and Piramus ago.
Of trewe men I finde but fewe mo
In alle my bokes, save this Piramus,
And therfor have I spoken of him thus.
For hit is deyntee to us men to finde
A man that can in love be trew and kinde.
Heer may ye seen, what lover so he be,
A woman dar and can as well as he.

Explicit legenda Tesbe.

III. THE LEGEND OF DIDO, QUEEN OF CARTHAGE.

INCIPIT LEGENDA DIDONIS MARTIRIS, CARTAGINIS REGINE.

GLORY and honour, Virgil Mantuan,
Be to thy name! and I shal, as I can,
Folow thy lantern, as thou gost biforn,
How Eneas to Dido was forsworn.
In thyn Eneïd and Naso wol I take
The tenour, and the grete effectes make.
Whan Troye broght was to destruccioun
By Grekes sleighte, and namely by Sinoun,
Feyning the hors y-offred to Minerve,
Through which that many a Troyan moste sterve;
And Ector had, after his deeth, appered,
And fyr so wood, it mighte nat be stered,
In al the noble tour of Ilioun,
That of the citee was the cheef dungeoun;
And al the contree was so lowe y-broght,
And Priamus the king fordoon and noght;
And Eneas was charged by Venus
To fleen awey, he took Ascanius,
That was his sone, in his right hand, and fiedde;
And on his bakke he bar and with him ledde
His olde fader, cleped Anchises,
And by the weye his wyf Creusa he lees.
And mochel sorwe hadde he in his minde
Er that he coude his felawshippe finde.
But, at the laste, whan he had hem founde,
He made him redy in a certein stounde,
And to the see ful faste he gan him hye
And saileth forth with al his companye
Toward Itaile, as wolde destinee.
But of his aventures in the see
Nis nat to purpos for to speke of here,
For hit acordeth nat to my matere.
But, as I seide, of him and of Dido
Shal be my tale, til that I have do.
So longe he sailed in the salte see
Til in Libye unnethe aryved he,
With shippes seven and with no more navye;
And glad was he to londe for to hye,
So was he with the tempest al to-shake.
And whan that he the haven had y-take,
He had a knight, was called Achates;
And him of al his felawshippe he chees
To goon with him, the contre for tespye;
He took with him no more companye.
But forth they goon, and lafte his shippes ryde,
His fere and he, with-outen any gyde.
So longe he walketh in this wildernesse
Til at the laste, he mette an hunteresse.
A bowe in honde and arwes hadde she,
Her clothes cutted were unto the knee;
But she was yit the fairest creature
That ever was y-formed by nature;
And Eneas and Achates she grette,
And thus she to hem spak, whan she hem mette.

'Sawe ye,' quod she, 'as ye han walked wyde,
Any of my sustren walke yow besyde,
With any wilde boor or other beste
That they han hunted to, in this foreste,
Y-tukked up, with arwes in her cas?'
'Nay, soothly, lady,' quod this Eneas;
'But by thy beaute, as hit thinketh me,
Thou mightest never erthely womman be,
But Phebus suster artow, as I gesse.
And, if so be that thou be a goddesse,
Have mercy on our labour and our wo.'
'I nam no goddes, soothly,' quod she tho;
'For maidens walken in this contree here,
With arwes and with bowe, in this manere.
This is the regne of Libie, ther ye been,
Of which that Dido lady is and queen'—
And shortly told him al the occasioun
Why Dido com into that regioun,
Of which as now me lusteth nat to ryme;
Hit nedeth nat; hit nere but los of tyme.
For this is al and som, it was Venus,
His owne moder, that spak with him thus;
And to Cartage she bad he sholde him dighte,
And vanished anoon out of his sighte.
I coude folwe, word for word, Virgyle,
But it wolde lasten al to longe a whyle.
This noble queen, that cleped was Dido,
That whylom was the wyf of Sitheo,
That fairer was then is the brighte sonne,
This noble toun of Cartage hath begonne;
In which she regneth in so greet honour,
That she was holde of alle quenes flour,
Of gentilesse, of freedom, of beautee;
That wel was him that mighte her ones see;
Of kinges and of lordes so desyred,
That al the world her beaute hadde y-fyred;
She stood so wel in every wightes grace.
Whan Eneas was come un-to that place,
Unto the maister-temple of al the toun
Ther Dido was in her devocioun,
Ful prively his wey than hath he nome.
Whan he was in the large temple come,
I can nat seyn if that hit be possible,
But Venus hadde him maked invisible—
Thus seith the book, with-outen any lees.
And whan this Eneas and Achates
Hadden in this temple been over-al,
Than founde they, depeynted on a wal,
How Troye and al the lond destroyed was.
'Allas! that I was born,' quod Eneas,
'Through-out the world our shame is kid so wyde,
Now it is peynted upon every syde!
We, that weren in prosperitee,
Be now disslaundred, and in swich degre,
No lenger for to liven I ne kepe!'
And, with that worde, he brast out for to wepe
So tendrely, that routhe hit was to sene
This fresshe lady, of the citee quene,
Stood in the temple, in her estat royal,
So richly, and eek so fair with-al,
So yong, so lusty, with her eyen glade,
That, if that god, that heven and erthe made,
Wolde han a love, for beaute and goodnesse,
And womanhod, and trouthe, and seemlinesse,
Whom sholde he loven but this lady swete?
There nis no womman to him half so mete.
Fortune, that hath the world in governaunce,
Hath sodeinly broght in so newe a chaunce,
That never was ther yit so fremd a cas.
For al the companye of Eneas,
Which that he wende han loren in the see,
Aryved is, nat fer fro that citee;
For which, the grettest of his lordes some
By aventure ben to the citee come,
Unto that same temple, for to seke
The quene, and of her socour her beseke;
Swich renoun was ther spronge of her goodnesse.

And, whan they hadden told al hir distresse,
And al hir tempest and hir harde cas,
Unto the quene appered Eneas,
And openly beknew that hit was he.
Who hadde Ioye than but his meynee,
That hadden founde hir lord, hir governour?
The quene saw they dide him swich honour,
And had herd ofte of Eneas, er tho,
And in her herte she hadde routhe and wo
That ever swich a noble man as he
Shal been disherited in swich degree;
And saw the man, that he was lyk a knight,
And suffisaunt of persone and of might,
And lyk to been a veray gentil man;
And wel his wordes he besette can,
And had a noble visage for the nones,
And formed wel of braunes and of bones.
For, after Venus, hadde he swich fairnesse,
That no man might be half so fair, I gesse.
And wel a lord he semed for to be.
And, for he was a straunger, somwhat she
Lyked him the bet, as, god do bote,
To some folk ofte newe thing is swote.
Anoon her herte hath pitee of his wo,
And, with that pitee, love com in also;
And thus, for pitee and for gentilesse,
Refresshed moste he been of his distresse.
She seide, certes, that she sory was
That he hath had swich peril and swich cas;
And, in her frendly speche, in this manere
She to him spak, and seide as ye may here.
'Be ye nat Venus sone and Anchises?
In good feith, al the worship and encrees
That I may goodly doon yow, ye shul have.
Your shippes and your meynee shal I save;'
And many a gentil word she spak him to;
And comaunded her messageres go
The same day, with-outen any faile,
His shippes for to seke, and hem vitaile.
She many a beste to the shippes sente,
And with the wyn she gan hem to presente;
And to her royal paleys she her spedde,
And Eneas alwey with her she ledde.
What nedeth yow the feste to descryve?
He never beter at ese was his lyve.
Ful was the feste of deyntees and richesse,
Of instruments, of song, and of gladnesse,
And many an amorous loking and devys.
This Eneas is come to Paradys
Out of the swolow of helle, and thus in Ioye
Remembreth him of his estat in Troye.
To dauncing-chambres ful of parements,
Of riche beddes, and of ornaments,
This Eneas is lad, after the mete.
And with the quene whan that he had sete,
And spyces parted, and the wyn agoon,
Unto his chambres was he lad anoon
To take his ese and for to have his reste,
With al his folk, to doon what so hem leste.
Ther nas coursere wel y-brydled noon,
Ne stede, for the Iusting wel to goon,
Ne large palfrey, esy for the nones,
Ne Iuwel, fretted ful of riche stones,
Ne sakkes ful of gold, of large wighte,
Ne ruby noon, that shynede by nighte,
Ne gentil hautein faucon heronere,
Ne hound, for hert or wilde boor or dere,
Ne coupe of gold, with florins newe y-bete,
That in the lond of Libie may be gete,
That Dido ne hath hit Eneas y-sent;
And al is payed, what that he hath spent.
Thus can this [noble] quene her gestes calle,
As she that can in freedom passen alle.
Eneas sothly eek, with-outen lees,
Hath sent un-to his shippe, by Achates,
After his sone, and after riche thinges,
Both ceptre, clothes, broches, and eek ringes,
Som for to were, and som for to presente
To her, that all thise noble thinges him sente;

And bad his sone, how that he sholde make
The presenting, and to the quene hit take.
Repaired is this Achates again,
And Eneas ful blisful is and fain
To seen his yonge sone Ascanius.
But natheles, our autour telleth us,
That Cupido, that is the god of love,
At preyere of his moder, hye above,
Hadde the lyknes of the child y-take,
This noble quene enamoured to make
On Eneas; but, as of that scripture,
Be as be may, I make of hit no cure.
But sooth is this, the quene hath mad swich chere
Un-to this child, that wonder is to here;
And of the present that his fader sente
She thanked him ful ofte, in good entente.
Thus is this quene in plesaunce and in Ioye,
With al this newe lusty folk of Troye.
And of the dedes hath she more enquered
Of Eneas, and al the story lered
Of Troye; and al the longe day they tweye
Entendeden to speken and to pleye;
Of which ther gan to breden swich a fyr,
That sely Dido hath now swich desyr
With Eneas, her newe gest, to dele,
That she hath lost her hewe, and eek her hele.
Now to theffect, now to the fruit of al,
Why I have told this story, and tellen shal.
Thus I beginne; hit fil, upon a night,
When that the mone up-reysed had her light,
This noble quene un-to her reste wente;
She syketh sore, and gan her-self turmente.
She waketh, walweth, maketh many a brayd,
As doon thise loveres, as I have herd sayd.
And at the laste, unto her suster Anne
She made her moon, and right thus spak she thanne.
'Now, dere suster myn, what may hit be
That me agasteth in my dreme?' quod she.
'This ilke Troyan is so in my thoght,
For that me thinketh he is so wel y-wroght,
And eek so lykly for to be a man,
And therwithal so mikel good he can,
That al my love and lyf lyth in his cure.
Have ye not herd him telle his aventure?
Now certes, Anne, if that ye rede hit me,
I wolde fain to him y-wedded be;
This is theffect; what sholde I more seye?
In him lyth al, to do me live or deye.'
Her suster Anne, as she that coude her good,
Seide as her thoughte, and somdel hit with-stood.
But her-of was so long a sermoning,
Hit were to long to make rehersing;
But fynally, hit may not been with-stonde;
Love wol love — for no wight wol hit wonde.
The dawening up-rist out of the see;
This amorous quene chargeth her meynee
The nettes dresse, and speres brode and kene;
An hunting wol this lusty fresshe quene;
So priketh her this newe Ioly wo.
To hors is al her lusty folk y-go;
Un-to the court the houndes been y-broght,
And up-on coursers, swift as any thoght,
Her yonge knightes hoven al aboute,
And of her wommen eek an huge route.
Up-on a thikke palfrey, paper-whyt,
With sadel rede, enbrouded with delyt,
Of gold the barres up-enbossed hye,
Sit Dido, al in gold and perre wrye;
And she is fair, as is the brighte morwe,
That heleth seke folk of nightes sorwe.
Up-on a courser, startling as the fyr,
Men mighte turne him with a litel wyr,
Sit Eneas, lyk Phebus to devyse;
So was he fresshe arayed in his wyse.
The fomy brydel with the bit of gold
Governeth he, right as him-self hath wold.
And forth this noble quene thus lat I ryde
An hunting, with this Troyan by her syde.
The herd of hertes founden is anoon,
With 'hey! go bet! prik thou! lat goon, lat goon!
Why nil the leoun comen or the bere,

That I mighte ones mete him with this spere?'
Thus seyn thise yonge folk, and up they kille
These hertes wilde, and han hem at hir wille.
Among al this to-romblen gan the heven,
The thunder rored with a grisly steven;
Doun com the rain, with hail and sleet so faste,
With hevenes fyr, that hit so sore agaste
This noble quene, and also her meynee,
That ech of hem was glad a-wey to flee.
And shortly, fro the tempest her to save,
She fledde her-self into a litel cave,
And with her wente this Eneas al-so;
I noot, with hem if ther wente any mo;
The autour maketh of hit no mencioun.
And heer began the depe affeccioun
Betwix hem two; this was the firste morwe
Of her gladnesse, and ginning of her sorwe.
For ther hath Eneas y-kneled so,
And told her al his herte, and al his wo,
And sworn so depe, to her to be trewe,
For wele or wo, and chaunge for no newe,
And as a fals lover so wel can pleyne,
That sely Dido rewed on his peyne,
And took him for husband, [to been] his wyf
For ever-mo, whyl that hem laste lyf.
And after this, whan that the tempest stente,
With mirth out as they comen, hoom they wente.
The wikked fame up roos, and that anon,
How Eneas hath with the quene y-gon
In-to the cave; and demed as hem liste;
And whan the king, that Yarbas hight, hit wiste,
As he that had her loved ever his lyf,
And wowed her, to have her to his wyf,
Swich sorwe as he hath maked, and swich chere,
Hit is a routhe and pitee for to here.
But, as in love, al-day hit happeth so,
That oon shal laughen at anothers wo;
Now laugheth Eneas, and is in Ioye
And more richesse than ever he was in Troye.
O sely womman, ful of innocence,
Ful of pitee, of trouthe, and conscience,
What maked yow to men to trusten so?
Have ye swich routhe upon hir feined wo,
And han swich olde ensamples yow beforn?
See ye nat alle, how they been for-sworn?
Wher see ye oon, that he ne hath laft his leef,
Or been unkinde, or doon her som mischeef,
Or pilled her, or bosted of his dede?
Ye may as wel hit seen, as ye may rede;
Tak heed now of this grete gentil-man,
This Troyan, that so wel her plesen can,
That feineth him so trewe and obeising,
So gentil and so privy of his doing,
And can so wel doon alle his obeisaunces,
And waiten her at festes and at daunces,
And when she goth to temple and hoom ageyn,
And fasten til he hath his lady seyn,
And bere in his devyses, for her sake,
Noot I nat what; and songes wolde he make,
Iusten, and doon of armes many thinges,
Sende her lettres, tokens, broches, ringes—
Now herkneth, how he shal his lady serve!
Ther-as he was in peril for to sterve
For hunger, and for mischeef in the see,
And desolat, and fled from his contree,
And al his folk with tempest al to-driven,
She hath her body and eek her reame yiven
In-to his hond, ther-as she mighte have been
Of other lond than of Cartage a queen,
And lived in Ioye y-nogh; what wolde ye more?
This Eneas, that hath so depe y-swore,
Is wery of his craft with-in a throwe;
The hote ernest is al over-blowe.
And prively he doth his shippes dighte,
And shapeth him to stele a-wey by nighte.
This Dido hath suspecioun of this,

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And thoughte wel, that hit was al a-mis;
For in his bedde he lyth a-night and syketh;
She asketh him anoon, what him mis-lyketh —
'My dere herte, which that I love most?'
'Certes,' quod he, 'this night my fadres gost
Hath in my sleep so sore me tormented,
And eek Mercurie his message hath presented,
That nedes to the conquest of Itaile
My destinee is sone for to saile;
For which, me thinketh, brosten is myn herte!'
Ther-with his false teres out they sterte;
And taketh her with-in his armes two.
'Is that in ernest,' quod she; 'wil ye so?
Have ye nat sworn to wyve me to take,
Alas! what womman wil ye of me make?
I am a gentil-woman and a queen,
Ye wil nat fro your wyf thus foule fleen?
That I was born! allas! what shal I do?'
To telle in short, this noble queen Dido,
She seketh halwes, and doth sacrifyse;
She kneleth, cryeth, that routhe is to devyse;
Coniureth him, and profreth him to be
His thral, his servant in the leste gree;
She falleth him to fote, and swowneth there
Dischevele, with her brighte gilte here,
And seith, 'have mercy! let me with yow ryde!
Thise lordes, which that wonen me besyde
Wil me destroyen only for your sake.
And, so ye wil me now to wyve take,
As ye han sworn, than wol I yive yow leve
To sleen me with your swerd now sone at eve!
For than yit shal I dyen as your wyf.
I am with childe, and yive my child his lyf.
Mercy, lord! have pite in your thoght!'
But al this thing availeth her right noght;
For on a night, slepinge, he let her lye,
And stal a-wey un-to his companye,
And, as a traitour, forth he gan to saile
Toward the large contree of Itaile.

Thus hath he laft Dido in wo and pyne;
And wedded ther a lady hight Lavyne.
A cloth he lafte, and eek his swerd stonding,
Whan he fro Dido stal in her sleping,
Right at her beddes heed, so gan he hye
Whan that he stal a-wey to his navye;
Which cloth, whan sely Dido gan awake,
She hath hit kist ful ofte for his sake;
And seide, 'O cloth, whyl Iupiter hit leste,
Tak now my soule, unbind me of this unreste!
I have fulfild of fortune al the cours.'
And thus, allas! with-outen his socours,
Twenty tyme y-swowned hath she thanne.
And, whan that she un-to her suster Anne
Compleyned had, of which I may nat wryte —
So greet a routhe I have hit for ten-dyte —
And bad her norice and her suster goon
To fecchen fyr and other thing anoon,
And seide, that she wolde sacrifye.
And, whan she mighte her tyme wel espye,
Up-on the fyr of sacrifys she sterte,
And with his swerd she roof her to the herte.
But, as myn autour seith, right thus she seyde;
Or she was hurt, before that she deyde,
She wroot a lettre anoon, that thus began: —
'Right so,' quod she, 'as that the whyte swan
Ayeins his deeth beginneth for to singe,
Right so to yow make I my compleyninge.
Nat that I trowe to geten yow again,
For wel I woot that it is al in vain,
Sin that the goddes been contraire to me.
But sin my name is lost through yow,' quod she,
'I may wel lese a word on yow, or letter,
Al-be-it that I shal be never the better;
For thilke wind that blew your ship a-wey,
The same wind hath blowe a-wey your fey.' —

But who wol al this letter have in minde,
Rede Ovide, and in him he shal hit finde.

Explicit Legenda Didonis martiris, Cartaginis regine.

IV. THE LEGEND OF HYPSIPYLE AND MEDEA.

INCIPIT LEGENDA YSIPHILE ET MEDEE, MARTIRUM.

Part I. The Legend of Hypsipyle.

THOU rote of false lovers, duk Iasoun!
Thou sly devourer and confusioun
Of gentil-wommen, tender creatures,
Thou madest thy reclaiming and thy lures
To ladies of thy statly apparaunce,
And of thy wordes, farced with plesaunce,
And of thy feyned trouthe and thy manere,
With thyn obeisaunce and thy humble chere,
And with thy counterfeted peyne and wo.
Ther other falsen oon, thou falsest two!
O! ofte swore thou that thou woldest dye
For love, whan thou ne feltest maladye
Save foul delyt, which that thou callest love!
If that I live, thy name shal be shove
In English, that thy sleighte shal be knowe!
Have at thee, Iasoun! now thyn horn is blowe!
But certes, hit is bothe routhe and wo
That love with false loveres werketh so;
For they shul have wel better love and chere
Than he that hath aboght his love ful dere,
Or had in armes many a blody box.
For ever as tendre a capoun et the fox,
Thogh he be fals and hath the foul betrayed,
As shal the good-man that ther-for hath payed.
Al have he to the capoun skille and right,
The false fox wol have his part at night.
On Iasoun this ensample is wel y-sene
By Isiphile and Medea the quene.
In Tessalye, as Guido telleth us,
Ther was a king that highte Pelleus,
That had a brother, which that highte Eson;
And, whan for age he mighte unnethes gon,
He yaf to Pelleus the governing
Of al his regne, and made him lord and king.
Of which Eson this Iasoun geten was,
That, in his tyme, in al that lond, ther was
Nat swich a famous knight of gentilesse,
Of freedom, and of strengthe and lustinesse.
After his fader deeth, he bar him so
That ther nas noon that liste been his fo,
But dide him al honour and companye;
Of which this Pelleus hath greet envye,
Imagining that Iasoun mighte be
Enhaunsed so, and put in swich degree
With love of lordes of his regioun,
That from his regne he may be put adoun.
And in his wit, a-night, compassed he
How Iasoun mighte best destroyed be
Withoute slaunder of his compasment.
And at the laste he took avisement
To senden him in-to som fer contree
Ther as this Iasoun may destroyed be.
This was his wit; al made he to Iasoun
Gret chere of love and of affeccioun,
For drede lest his lordes hit espyde.
So fil hit so, as fame renneth wyde,
Ther was swich tyding over-al and swich los,
That in an yle that called was Colcos,
Beyonde Troye, estward in the see,
That ther-in was a ram, that men mighte see,
That had a flees of gold, that shoon so brighte,
That no-wher was ther swich an-other sighte;
But hit was kept alway with a dragoun,
And many othere merveils, up and doun,
And with two boles, maked al of bras,
That spitten fyr, and moche thing ther was.

But this was eek the tale, nathelees,
That who-so wolde winne thilke flees,
He moste bothe, or he hit winne mighte,
With the boles and the dragoun fighte;
And king Oëtes lord was of that yle.
This Pelleus bethoghte upon this wyle;
That he his nevew Iasoun wolde enhorte
To sailen to that lond, him to disporte,
And seide, 'Nevew, if hit mighte be
That swich a worship mighte fallen thee,
That thou this famous tresor mightest winne,
And bringen hit my regioun with-inne,
Hit were to me gret plesaunce and honour;
Than were I holde to quyte thy labour.
And al the cost I wol my-selven make;
And chees what folk that thou wilt with thee take;
Lat see now, darstow taken this viage?'
Iasoun was yong, and lusty of corage,
And under-took to doon this ilke empryse.
Anoon Argus his shippes gan devyse;
With Iasoun wente the stronge Ercules,
And many an-other that he with him chees.
But who-so axeth who is with him gon,
Lat him go reden Argonauticon,
For he wol telle a tale long y-now.
Philotetes anoon the sail up-drow,
Whan that the wind was good, and gan him hye
Out of his contree called Tessalye.
So long he sailed in the salte see
Til in the yle Lemnoun aryved he—
Al be this nat rehersed of Guido,
Yet seith Ovyde in his Epistles so—
And of this yle lady was and quene
The faire yonge Isiphilee, the shene,
That whylom Thoas doghter was, the king.
Isiphilee was goon in her playing;
And, roming on the clyves by the see,
Under a banke anoon espyed she
Wher that the ship of Iasoun gan aryve.
Of her goodnesse adoun she sendeth blyve
To witen yif that any straunge wight
With tempest thider were y-blowe a-night,
To doon him socour; as was her usaunce
To forthren every wight, and doon plesaunce
Of veray bountee and of curtesye.
This messagere adoun him gan to hye,
And fond Iasoun, and Ercules also,
That in a cogge to londe were y-go
Hem to refresshen and to take the eyr.
The morwening atempre was and fair;
And in his wey the messagere hem mette.
Ful cunningly thise lordes two he grette,
And dide his message, axing hem anoon
Yif they were broken, or ought wo begoon,
Or hadde nede of lodesmen or vitaile;
For of socour they shulde no-thing faile,
For hit was utterly the quenes wille.
Iasoun answerde, mekely and stille,
'My lady,' quod he, 'thanke I hertely
Of her goodnesse; us nedeth, trewely,
No-thing as now, but that we wery be,
And come for to pleye, out of the see,
Til that the wind be better in our weye.'
This lady rometh by the clif to pleye,
With her meynee, endelong the stronde,
And fynt this Iasoun and this other stonde,
In spekinge of this thing, as I yow tolde.
This Ercules and Iasoun gan beholde
How that the quene hit was, and faire her grette
Anon-right as they with this lady mette;
And she took heed, and knew, by hir manere,
By hir aray, by wordes and by chere,
That hit were gentil-men, of greet degree.
And to the castel with her ledeth she
Thise straunge folk, and doth hem greet honour,
And axeth hem of travail and labour
That they han suffred in the salte see;
So that, within a day, or two, or three,
She knew, by folk that in his shippes be,
That hit was Iasoun, ful of renomee,
And Ercules, that had the grete los,
That soghten the aventures of Colcos;
And dide hem honour more then before,
And with hem deled ever lenger the more,
For they ben worthy folk, with-outen lees.

And namely, most she spak with Ercules;
To him her herte bar, he sholde be
Sad, wys, and trewe, of wordes avisee,
With-outen any other affeccioun
Of love, or evil imaginacioun.
This Ercules hath so this Iasoun preysed,
That to the sonne he hath him up areysed,
That half so trewe a man ther nas of love
Under the cope of heven that is above;
And he was wys, hardy, secree, and riche.—
Of thise three pointes ther nas noon him liche;
Of freedom passed he, and lustihede,
Alle tho that liven or ben dede;
Ther-to so greet a gentil-man was he,
And of Tessalie lykly king to be.
Ther nas no lak, but that he was agast
To love, and for to speke shamefast.
He hadde lever him-self to mordre, and dye
Than that men shulde a lover him espye:—
'As wolde almighty god that I had yive
My blood and flesh, so that I mighte live,
With the nones that he hadde o-wher a wyf
For his estat; for swich a lusty lyf
She sholde lede with this lusty knight!'
And al this was compassed on the night
Betwixe him Iasoun and this Ercules.
Of thise two heer was mad a shrewed lees
To come to hous upon an innocent;
For to be-dote this queen was hir assent.
And Iasoun is as coy as is a maide,
He loketh pitously, but noght he saide,
But frely yaf he to her conseileres
Yiftes grete, and to her officeres.
As wolde god I leiser hadde, and tyme,
By proces al his wowing for to ryme.
But in this hous if any fals lover be,
Right as him-self now doth, right so dide he,
With feyning and with every sotil dede.
Ye gete no more of me, but ye wil rede
Thoriginal, that telleth al the cas.

The somme is this, that Iasoun wedded was
Unto this quene, and took of her substaunce
What-so him liste, unto his purveyaunce;
And upon her begat he children two,
And drow his sail, and saw her nevermo.
A lettre sente she to him certein,
Which were to long to wryten and to sein,
And him repreveth of his grete untrouthe,
And preyeth him on her to have som routhe.
And of his children two, she seide him this,
That they be lyke, of alle thing, y-wis,
To Iasoun, save they coude nat begyle;
And preyed god, or hit were longe whyle,
That she, that had his herte y-raft her fro,
Moste finden him to her untrewe al-so,
And that she moste bothe her children spille,
And alle tho that suffreth him his wille.
And trew to Iasoun was she al her lyf,
And ever kepte her chast, as for his wyf;
Ne never had she Ioye at her herte,
But dyed, for his love, of sorwes smerte.

Part II. *The Legend of Medea.*

To Colcos comen is this duk Iasoun,
That is of love devourer and dragoun.
As matere appetyteth forme al-wey,
And from forme in-to forme hit passen may,
Or as a welle that were botomlees,
Right so can fals Iasoun have no pees.
For, to desyren, through his appetyt,
To doon with gentil wommen his delyt,
This is his lust and his felicitee.
Iasoun is romed forth to the citee,
That whylom cleped was Iaconitos,
That was the maister-toun of al Colcos,
And hath y-told the cause of his coming

Un-to Oëtes, of that contre king,
Preying him that he moste doon his assay
To gete the flees of gold, if that he may;
Of which the king assenteth to his bone,
And doth him honour, as hit is to done,
So ferforth, that his doghter and his eyr,
Medea, which that was so wys and fair
That fairer saw ther never man with yë,
He made her doon to Iasoun companye
At mete, and sitte by him in the halle.
Now was Iasoun a semely man withalle,
And lyk a lord, and had a greet renoun,
And of his loke as real as leoun,
And goodly of his speche, and famulere,
And coude of love al craft and art plenere
With-oute boke, with everich observaunce.
And, as fortune her oghte a foul meschaunce,
She wex enamoured upon this man.
'Iasoun,' quod she, 'for ought I see or can,
As of this thing the which ye been aboute,
Ye han your-self y-put in moche doute.
For, who-so wol this aventure acheve,
He may nat wel asterten, as I leve,
With-outen deeth, but I his helpe be.
But natheles, hit is my wille,' quod she,
'To forthren yow, so that ye shal nat dye,
But turnen, sound, hoom to your Tessalye.'
'My righte lady,' quod this Iasoun tho,
'That ye han of my dethe or of my wo
Any reward, and doon me this honour,
I wot wel that my might ne my labour
May nat deserve hit in my lyves day;
God thanke yow, ther I ne can ne may.
Your man am I, and lowly you beseche,
To been my help, with-oute more speche;
But certes, for my deeth shal I nat spare.'
Tho gan this Medea to him declare
The peril of this cas, fro point to point,
And of his batail, and in what disioint
He mote stande, of which no creature,
Save only she, ne mighte his lyf assure.
And shortly, to the point right for to go,
They been accorded ful, betwix-hem two,
That Iasoun shal her wedde, as trewe knight;
And term y-set, to come sone at night
Unto her chambre, and make ther his ooth,
Upon the goddes, that he, for leef ne looth,
Ne sholde her never falsen, night ne day,
To been her husbond, whyl he liven may,
As she that from his deeth him saved here.
And her-upon, at night they mette y-fere,
And doth his ooth, and goth with her to bedde.
And on the morwe, upward he him spedde;
For she hath taught him how he shal nat faile
The flees to winne, and stinten his bataile;
And saved him his lyf and his honour;
And gat him greet name as a conqueror
Right through the sleight of her enchantement.
Now hath Iasoun the flees, and hoom is went
With Medea, and tresor ful gret woon.
But unwist of her fader is she goon
To Tessaly, with duk Iasoun her leef,
That afterward hath broght her to meschef.
For as a traitour he is from her go,
And with her lafte his yonge children two,
And falsly hath betrayed her, allas!
And ever in love a cheef traitour he was;
And wedded yit the thridde wyf anon,
That was the doghter of the king Creon.
This is the meed of loving and guerdon

That Medea received of Iasoun
Right for her trouthe and for her kindenesse,
That loved him better than her-self, I gesse,
And lafte her fader and her heritage.
And of Iasoun this is the vassalage,
That, in his dayes, nas ther noon y-founde
So fals a lover going on the grounde.
And therfor in her lettre thus she seyde
First, whan she of his falsnesse him umbreyde,

'Why lyked me thy yelow heer to see
More then the boundes of myn honestee,
Why lyked me thy youthe and thy fairnesse,
And of thy tonge the infinit graciousnesse?
O, haddest thou in thy conquest deed y-be,
Ful mikel untrouthe had ther dyed with thee!'
Wel can Ovyde her lettre in vers endyte,
Which were as now to long for me to wryte.

Explicit Legenda Ysiphile et Medee, Martirum.

V. THE LEGEND OF LUCRETIA.

INCIPIT LEGENDA LUCRECIE ROME, MARTIRIS.

Now moot I seyn the exiling of kinges
Of Rome, for hir horrible doinges,
And of the laste king Tarquinius,
As saith Ovyde and Titus Livius.
But for that cause telle I nat this storie,
But for to preise and drawen to memorie
The verray wyf, the verray trewe Lucresse,
That, for her wyfhood and her stedfastnesse,
Nat only that thise payens her comende,
But he, that cleped is in our legende
The grete Austin, hath greet compassioun
Of this Lucresse, that starf at Rome toun;
And in what wyse, I wol but shortly trete,
And of this thing I touche but the grete.
Whan Ardea beseged was aboute
With Romains, that ful sterne were and stoute,
Ful longe lay the sege, and litel wroghte,
So that they were half ydel, as hem thoghte;
And in his pley Tarquinius the yonge
Gan for to iape, for he was light of tonge,
And seyde, that 'it was an ydel lyf;
No man did ther no more than his wyf;
And lat us speke of wyves, that is best;
Praise every man his owne, as him lest,
And with our speche lat us ese our herte.'
A knight, that highte Colatyne, up sterte,
And seyde thus, 'nay, for hit is no nede
To trowen on the word, but on the dede.
I have a wyf,' quod he, 'that, as I trowe,
Is holden good of alle that ever her knowe;
Go we to-night to Rome, and we shul see.'
Tarquinius answerde, 'that lyketh me.'
To Rome be they come, and faste hem dighte
To Colatynes hous, and doun they lighte,
Tarquinius, and eek this Colatyne.
The husbond knew the estres wel and fyne,
And prively into the hous they goon;
Nor at the gate porter was ther noon;
And at the chambre-dore they abyde.
This noble wyf sat by her beddes syde
Dischevele, for no malice she ne thoghte;
And softe wolle our book seith that she wroghte
To kepen her fro slouthe and ydelnesse;
And bad her servants doon hir businesse,
And axeth hem, 'what tydings heren ye?

How seith men of the sege, how shal hit be?
God wolde the walles weren falle adoun;
Myn husbond is so longe out of this toun,
For which the dreed doth me so sore smerte,
Right as a swerd hit stingeth to myn herte
Whan I think on the sege or of that place;
God save my lord, I preye him for his grace:'—
And ther-with-al ful tenderly she weep,
And of her werk she took no more keep,
But mekely she leet her eyen falle;
And thilke semblant sat her wel with-alle.
And eek her teres, ful of honestee,
Embelisshed her wyfly chastitee;
Her countenaunce is to her herte digne,
For they acordeden in dede and signe.
And with that word her husbond Colatyn,
Or she of him was war, com sterting in,
And seide, 'dreed thee noght, for I am here!'
And she anoon up roos, with blisful chere,
And kiste him, as of wyves is the wone.
Tarquinius, this proude kinges sone,
Conceived hath her beautee and her chere,
Her yelow heer, her shap, and her manere,
Her hew, her wordes that she hath compleyned,
And by no crafte her beautee nas nat feyned;
And caughte to this lady swich desyr,
That in his herte brende as any fyr
So woodly, that his wit was al forgeten.
For wel, thoghte he, she sholde nat be geten;
And ay the more that he was in dispair,
The more he coveteth and thoghte her fair.
His blinde lust was al his covetinge.
A-morwe, whan the brid began to singe,
Unto the sege he comth ful privily,
And by himself he walketh sobrely,
Thimage of her recording alwey newe;
'Thus lay her heer, and thus fresh was her hewe;
Thus sat, thus spak, thus span; this was her chere,
Thus fair she was, and this was her manere.'
Al this conceit his herte hath now y-take.
And, as the see, with tempest al to-shake,
That, after whan the storm is al ago,
Yet wol the water quappe a day or two,
Right so, thogh that her forme wer absent,
The plesaunce of her forme was present;
But natheles, nat plesaunce, but delyt,
Or an unrightful talent with despyt;
'For, maugre her, she shal my lemman be;
Hap helpeth hardy man alday,' quod he;
'What ende that I make, hit shall be so;'
And girt him with his swerde, and gan to go;
And forth he rit til he to Rome is come,
And al aloon his wey than hath he nome
Unto the house of Colatyn ful right.
Doun was the sonne, and day hath lost his light;
And in he com un-to a privy halke,
And in the night ful theefly gan he stalke,
Whan every night was to his reste broght,
Ne no wight had of tresoun swich a thoght.
Were hit by window or by other gin,
With swerde y-drawe, shortly he comth in
Ther as she lay, this noble wyf Lucresse.
And, as she wook, her bed she felte presse.
'What beste is that,' quod she, 'that weyeth thus?'
'I am the kinges sone, Tarquinius,'
Quod he, 'but and thou crye, or noise make,
Or if thou any creature awake,
By thilke god that formed man on lyve,
This swerd through-out thyn herte shal I ryve.'

And ther-withal unto her throte he sterte,
And sette the point al sharp upon her herte.
No word she spak, she hath no might therto.
What shal she sayn? her wit is al ago.
Right as a wolf that fynt a lomb aloon,
To whom shal she compleyne, or make moon?
What! shal she fighte with an hardy knight?
Wel wot men that a woman hath no might.
What! shal she crye, or how shal she asterte
That hath her by the throte, with swerde at herte?
She axeth grace, and seith al that she can.
'Ne wolt thou nat,' quod he, this cruel man,
'As wisly Iupiter my soule save,
As I shal in the stable slee thy knave,
And leye him in thy bed, and loude crye,
That I thee finde in suche avouterye;
And thus thou shalt be deed, and also lese
Thy name, for thou shalt non other chese.'
Thise Romain wyves loveden so hir name
At thilke tyme, and dredden so the shame,
That, what for fere of slaundre and drede of deeth,
She loste bothe at-ones wit and breeth,
And in a swough she lay and wex so deed,
Men mighte smyten of her arm or heed;
She feleth no-thing, neither foul ne fair.
Tarquinius, that art a kinges eyr,
And sholdest, as by linage and by right,
Doon as a lord and as a verray knight,
Why hastow doon dispyt to chivalrye?
Why hastow doon this lady vilanye?
Allas! of thee this was a vileins dede!
But now to purpos; in the story I rede,
Whan he was goon, al this mischaunce is falle.
This lady sente after her frendes alle,
Fader, moder, husbond, al y-fere;
And al dischevele, with her heres clere,
In habit swich as women used tho
Unto the burying of her frendes go,
She sit in halle with a sorweful sighte.
Her frendes axen what her aylen mighte,
And who was deed? And she sit ay wepinge,
A word for shame ne may she forth outbringe,
Ne upon hem she dorste nat beholde.
But atte laste of Tarquiny she hem tolde,
This rueful cas, and al this thing horrible.
The wo to tellen hit were impossible,
That she and alle her frendes made atones.
Al hadde folkes hertes been of stones,
Hit mighte have maked hem upon her rewe,
Her herte was so wyfly and so trewe.
She seide, that, for her gilt ne for her blame,
Her husbond sholde nat have the foule name,
That wolde she nat suffre, by no wey.
And they answerden alle, upon hir fey,
That they foryeve hit her, for hit was right;
Hit was no gilt, hit lay nat in her might;
And seiden her ensamples many oon.
But al for noght; for thus she seide anoon,
'Be as be may,' quod she, 'of forgiving,
I wol nat have no forgift for no-thing.'
But prively she caughte forth a knyf,
And therwith-al she rafte her-self her lyf;
And as she fel adoun, she caste her look,
And of her clothes yit she hede took;
For in her falling yit she hadde care
Lest that her feet or swiche thing lay bare;
So wel she loved clennesse and eek trouthe.
Of her had al the toun of Rome routhe,
And Brutus by her chaste blode hath swore
That Tarquin sholde y-banisht be therfore,
And al his kin; and let the peple calle,
And openly the tale he tolde hem alle,
And openly let carie her on a bere

Through al the toun, that men may see and here
The horrible deed of her oppressioun.
Ne never was ther king in Rome toun
Sin thilke day; and she was holden there
A seint, and ever her day y-halwed dere
As in hir lawe: and thus endeth Lucresse,
The noble wyf, as Titus bereth witnesse.
I tell hit, for she was of love so trewe,
Ne in her wille she chaunged for no newe.
And for the stable herte, sad and kinde,
That in these women men may alday finde;
Ther as they caste hir herte, ther hit dwelleth.
For wel I wot, that Crist him-selve telleth,
That in Israel, as wyd as is the lond,
That so gret feith in al the lond he ne fond
As in a woman; and this is no lye.
And as of men, loketh which tirannye
They doon alday; assay hem who so liste,
The trewest is ful brotel for to triste.

Explicit Legenda Lucrecie Rome, Martiris.

VI. THE LEGEND OF ARIADNE.

INCIPIT LEGENDA ADRIANE DE ATHENES.

IUGE infernal, Minos, of Crete king,
Now cometh thy lot, now comestow on the ring;
Nat for thy sake only wryte I this storie,
But for to clepe agein unto memorie
Of Theseus the grete untrouthe of love;
For which the goddes of the heven above
Ben wrothe, and wreche han take for thy sinne.
Be reed for shame! now I thy lyf beginne.
Minos, that was the mighty king of Crete,
That hadde an hundred citees stronge and grete,
To scole hath sent his sone Androgeus,
To Athenes; of the whiche hit happed thus,
That he was slayn, lerning philosophye,
Right in that citee, nat but for envye.
The grete Minos, of the whiche I speke,
His sones deeth is comen for to wreke;
Alcathoe he bisegeth harde and longe.
But natheles the walles be so stronge,
And Nisus, that was king of that citee,
So chivalrous, that litel dredeth he;
Of Minos or his ost took he no cure,
Til on a day befel an aventure,
That Nisus doghter stood upon the wal,
And of the sege saw the maner al.
So happed hit, that, at a scarmishing,
She caste her herte upon Minos the king,
For his beautee and for his chivalrye,
So sore, that she wende for to dye.
And, shortly of this proces for to pace,
She made Minos winnen thilke place,
So that the citee was al at his wille,
To saven whom him list, or elles spille;
But wikkedly he quitte her kindenesse,
And let her drenche in sorowe and distresse,
Nere that the goddes hadde of her pite;
But that tale were to long as now for me.
Athenes wan this king Minos also,
And Alcathoe and other tounes mo;
And this theffect, that Minos hath so driven
Hem of Athenes, that they mote him yiven
Fro yere to yere her owne children dere
For to be slayn, as ye shul after here.
This Minos hath a monstre, a wikked beste,
That was so cruel that, without areste,
Whan that a man was broght in his presence,
He wolde him ete, ther helpeth no defence.

And every thridde yeer, with-outen doute,
They casten lot, and, as hit com aboute
On riche, on pore, he moste his sone take, 1934
And of his child he moste present make
Unto Minos, to save him or to spille,
Or lete his beste devoure him at his wille.
And this hath Minos don, right in despyt; 1938
To wreke his sone was set al his delyt,
And maken hem of Athenes his thral
Fro yere to yere, whyl that he liven shal;
And hoom he saileth whan this toun is wonne.
This wikked custom is so longe y-ronne
Til that of Athenes king Egeus
Mot sende his owne sone, Theseus, 1945
Sith that the lot is fallen him upon,
To be devoured, for grace is ther non.
And forth is lad this woful yonge knight
Unto the court of king Minos ful right,
And in a prison, fetered, cast is he 1950
Til thilke tyme he sholde y-freten be.
Wel maystow wepe, O woful Theseus,
That art a kinges sone, and dampned thus.
Me thinketh this, that thou were depe y-holde
To whom that saved thee fro cares colde!
And now, if any woman helpe thee, 1956
Wel oughtestow her servant for to be,
And been her trewe lover yeer by yere!
But now to come ageyn to my matere.
The tour, ther as this Theseus is throwe 1960
Doun in the botom derke and wonder lowe,
Was ioyning in the walle to a foreyne;
And hit was longing to the doghtren tweyne
Of king Minos, that in hir chambres grete
Dwelten above, toward the maister-strete, 1965
In mochel mirthe, in Ioye and in solas.
Not I nat how, hit happed ther, per cas,
As Theseus compleyned him by nighte,
The kinges doghter, Adrian that highte,
And eek her suster Phedra, herden al
His compleyning, as they stode on the wal 1971
And lokeden upon the brighte mone;
Hem leste nat to go to bedde sone.
And of his wo they had compassioun;
A kinges sone to ben in swich prisoun
And be devoured, thoughte hem gret pitee. 1976
Than Adrian spak to her suster free,
And seyde, 'Phedra, leve suster dere,
This woful lordes sone may ye nat here,
How pitously compleyneth he his kin,
And eek his pore estat that he is in, 1981
And gilteless? now certes, hit is routhe!
And if ye wol assenten, by my trouthe,
He shal be holpen, how so that we do!'
Phedra answerde, 'y-wis, me is as wo
For him as ever I was for any man; 1986
And, to his help, the beste reed I can
Is that we doon the gayler prively
To come, and speke with us hastily,
And doon this woful man with him to come. 1990
For if he may this monstre overcome,
Than were he quit; ther is noon other bote.
Lat us wel taste him at his herte-rote,
That, if so be that he a wepen have,
Wher that he dar, his lyf to kepe and save, 1995
Fighten with this fend, and him defende.
For, in the prison, ther he shal descende,
Ye wite wel, that the beste is in a place
That nis nat derk, and hath roum eek and space
To welde an ax or swerd or staf or knyf,
So that, me thinketh, he sholde save his lyf; 2001
If that he be a man, he shal do so.
And we shul make him balles eek also
Of wexe and towe, that, whan he gapeth faste,
Into the bestes throte he shal hem caste
To slake his hunger and encombre his teeth; 2006
And right anon, whan that Theseus seeth
The beste achoked, he shal on him lepe
To sleen him, or they comen more to-hepe.
This wepen shal the gayler, or that tyde,
Ful privily within the prison hyde; 2011
And, for the hous is crinkled to and fro,
And hath so queinte weyes for to go —
For hit is shapen as the mase is wroght —
Therto have I a remedie in my thoght,

That, by a clewe of twyne, as he hath goon,
The same wey he may returne anoon,
Folwing alwey the threed, as he hath come.
And, whan that he this beste hath overcome,
Then may he fleen awey out of this drede,
And eek the gayler may he with him lede,
And him avaunce at hoom in his contree,
Sin that so greet a lordes sone is he.
This is my reed, if that he dar hit take.'
What sholde I lenger sermoun of hit make?
The gayler cometh, and with him Theseus.
And whan thise thinges been acorded thus,
Adoun sit Theseus upon his knee: —
'The righte lady of my lyf,' quod he,
'I, sorweful man, y-dampned to the deeth,
Fro yow, whyl that me lasteth lyf or breeth,
I wol nat twinne, after this aventure,
But in your servise thus I wol endure,
That, as a wrecche unknowe, I wol yow serve
For ever-mo, til that myn herte sterve.
Forsake I wol at hoom myn heritage,
And, as I seide, ben of your court a page,
If that ye vouche-sauf that, in this place,
Ye graunte me to han so gret a grace
That I may han nat but my mete and drinke;
And for my sustenance yit wol I swinke,
Right as yow list, that Minos ne no wight —
Sin that he saw me never with eyen sight —
Ne no man elles, shal me conne espye;
So slyly and so wel I shal me gye,
And me so wel disfigure and so lowe,
That in this world ther shal no man me knowe,
To han my lyf, and for to han presence
Of yow, that doon to me this excellence.
And to my fader shal I senden here
This worthy man, that is now your gaylere,
And, him to guerdon, that he shal wel be
Oon of the grettest men of my contree.
And yif I dorste seyn, my lady bright,
I am a kinges sone, and eek a knight;
As wolde god, yif that hit mighte be
Ye weren in my contree, alle three,
And I with yow, to bere yow companye,
Than shulde ye seen yif that I ther-of lye!
And, if I profre yow in low manere
To ben your page and serven yow right here,
But I yow serve as lowly in that place,
I prey to Mars to yive me swiche a grace
That shames deeth on me ther mote falle,
And deeth and povert to my frendes alle;
And that my spirit by nighte mote go
After my deeth, and walke to and fro;
That I mote of a traitour have a name,
For which my spirit go, to do me shame!
And yif I ever claime other degree,
But-if ye vouche-sauf to yive hit me,
As I have seid, of shames deeth I deye!
And mercy, lady! I can nat elles seye!'
A seemly knight was Theseus to see,
And yong, but of a twenty yeer and three;
But who-so hadde y-seyn his countenaunce,
He wolde have wept, for routhe of his penaunce;
For which this Adriane in this manere
Answerde to his profre and to his chere.
'A kinges sone, and eek a knight,' quod she,
'To been my servant in so low degree,
God shilde hit, for the shame of women alle!
And leve me never swich a cas befalle!
But sende yow grace and sleighte of herte also,
Vow to defende and knightly sleen your fo,
And leve herafter that I may yow finde
To me and to my suster here so kinde,
That I repente nat to give yow lyf!
Yit were hit better that I were your wyf,
Sin that ye been as gentil born as I,
And have a rëaume, nat but faste by,
Then that I suffred giltles yow to sterve,
Or that I let yow as a page serve;
Hit is not profit, as unto your kinrede;

But what is that that man nil do for drede?
And to my suster, sin that hit is so
That she mot goon with me, if that I go,
Or elles suffre deeth as wel as I,
That ye unto your sone as trewely
Doon her be wedded at your hoom-coming.
This is the fynal ende of al this thing;
Ye swere hit heer, on al that may be sworn.'
'Ye, lady myn,' quod he, 'or elles torn
Mote I be with the Minotaur to-morwe!
And haveth her-of my herte-blood to borwe,
Yif that ye wile; if I had knyf or spere,
I wolde hit leten out, and ther-on swere,
For than at erst I wot ye wil me leve.
By Mars, that is the cheef of my bileve,
So that I mighte liven and nat faile
To-morwe for tacheve my bataile,
I nolde never fro this place flee,
Til that ye shuld the verray preve see.
For now, if that the sooth I shal yow say,
I have y-loved yow ful many a day,
Thogh ye ne wiste hit nat, in my contree.
And aldermost desyred yow to see
Of any erthly living creature;
Upon my trouthe I swere, and yow assure,
Thise seven yeer I have your servant be;
Now have I yow, and also have ye me,
My dere herte, of Athenes duchesse!'
This lady smyleth at his stedfastnesse,
And at his hertly wordes, and his chere,
And to her suster seide in this manere,
Al softely, 'now, suster myn,' quod she,
'Now be we duchesses, bothe I and ye,
And sikered to the regals of Athenes,
And bothe her-after lykly to be quenes,
And saved fro his deeth a kinges sone,
As ever of gentil women is the wone
To save a gentil man, emforth hir might,
In honest cause, and namely in his right.
Me thinketh no wight oghte her-of us blame,
Ne beren us ther-for an evel name.'
And shortly of this matere for to make,
This Theseus of her hath leve y-take,
And every point performed was in dede
As ye have in this covenant herd me rede.
His wepen, his clew, his thing that I have said,
Was by the gayler in the hous y-laid
Ther as this Minotaur hath his dwelling,
Right faste by the dore, at his entring.
And Theseus is lad unto his deeth,
And forth un-to this Minotaur he geeth,
And by the teching of this Adriane
He overcom this beste, and was his bane;
And out he cometh by the clewe again
Ful prevely, whan he this beste hath slain;
And by the gayler geten hath a barge,
And of his wyves tresor gan hit charge,
And took his wyf, and eek her suster free,
And eek the gayler, and with hem alle three
Is stole awey out of the lond by nighte,
And to the contre of Ennopye him dighte
Ther as he had a frend of his knowinge.
Ther festen they, ther daunceu they and singe;
And in his armes hath this Adriane,
That of the beste hath kept him from his bane;
And gat him ther a newe barge anoon,
And of his contree-folk a ful gret woon,
And taketh his leve, and hoomward saileth he.
And in an yle, amid the wilde see,
Ther as ther dwelte creature noon
Save wilde bestes, and that ful many oon,
He made his ship a-londe for to sette;
And in that yle half a day he lette,
And seide, that on the lond he moste him reste.
His mariners han doon right as him leste;
And, for to tellen shortly in this cas,
Whan Adriane his wyf a-slepe was,
For that her suster fairer was than she,
He taketh her in his hond, and forth goth he
To shippe, and as a traitour stal his way
Whyl that this Adriane a-slepe lay,
And to his contree-ward he saileth blyve—

A twenty devil way the wind him dryve! —
And fond his fader drenched in the see.
Me list no more to speke of him, parde;
Thise false lovers, poison be hir bane!
But I wol turne again to Adriane
That is with slepe for werinesse atake.
Ful sorwefully her herte may awake.
Allas! for thee my herte hath now pite!
Right in the dawening awaketh she,
And gropeth in the bedde, and fond right noght.
'Allas!' quod she, 'that ever I was wroght!
I am betrayed!' and her heer to-rente,
And to the stronde bar-fot faste she wente,
And cryed, 'Theseus! myn herte swete!
Wher be ye, that I may nat with yow mete,
And mighte thus with bestes been y-slain?'
The holwe rokkes answerde her again;
No man she saw, and yit shyned the mone,
And hye upon a rokke she wente sone,
And saw his barge sailing in the see.
Cold wex her herte, and right thus seide she.
'Meker than ye finde I the bestes wilde!'
Hadde he nat sinne, that her thus begylde?
She cryed, 'O turne again, for routhe and sinne!
Thy barge hath nat al his meiny inne!'
Her kerchef on a pole up stikked she,
Ascaunce that he sholde hit wel y-see,
And him remembre that she was behinde,
And turne again, and on the stronde her finde;
But al for noght; his wey he is y-goon.
And doun she fil a-swown upon a stoon;
And up she rist, and kiste, in al her care,
The steppes of his feet, ther he hath fare,
And to her bedde right thus she speketh tho: —
'Thou bed,' quod she, 'that hast receyved two,
Thou shalt answere of two, and nat of oon!
Wher is thy gretter part away y-goon?
Allas! wher shal I, wrecched wight, become!
For, thogh so be that ship or boot heer come,
Hoom to my contree dar I nat for drede;
I can my-selven in this cas nat rede!'
What shal I telle more her compleining?
Hit is so long, hit were an hevy thing.
In her epistle Naso telleth al;
But shortly to the ende I telle shal.
The goddes have her holpen, for pitee;
And, in the signe of Taurus, men may see
The stones of her coroun shyne clere. —
I wol no more speke of this matere;
But thus this false lover can begyle
His trewe love. The devil quyte him his whyle!

Explicit Legenda Adriane de Athenes.

VII. THE LEGEND OF PHILOMELA.

INCIPIT LEGENDA PHILOMENE.

Deus dator formarum.

THOU yiver of the formes, that hast wroght
The faire world, and bare hit in thy thoght
Eternally, or thou thy werk began,
Why madest thou, unto the slaundre of man,
Or — al be that hit was not thy doing,
As for that fyn to make swich a thing —
Why sufferest thou that Tereus was bore,
That is in love so fals and so forswore,
That, fro this world up to the firste hevene,
Corrumpeth, whan that folk his name nevene?
And, as to me, so grisly was his dede,
That, whan that I his foule story rede,
Myn eyen wexen foule and sore also;

Yit last the venim of so longe ago, 2241
That hit enfecteth him that wol beholde
The story of Tereus, of which I tolde.
Of Trace was he lord, and kin to Marte,
The cruel god that stant with blody darte;
And wedded had he, with a blisful chere,
King Pandiones faire doghter dere,
That highte Progne, flour of her contree,
Thogh Iuno list nat at the feste be,
Ne Ymeneus, that god of wedding is;
But at the feste redy been y-wis, 2251
The furies three, with alle hir mortel brond.
The owle al night aboute the balkes wond,
That prophet is of wo and of mis-chaunce.
This revel, ful of songe and ful of daunce, 2255
Lasteth a fourtenight, or litel lasse.
But, shortly of this story for to passe,
For I am wery of him for to telle,
Five yeer his wyf and he togeder dwelle,
Til on a day she gan so sore longe 2260
To seen her suster, that she saw nat longe,
That for desyr she niste what to seye.
But to her husband gan she for to preye,
For goddes love, that she moste ones goon
Her suster for to seen, and come anoon,
Or elles, but she moste to her wende, 2266
She preyde him, that he wolde after her sende;
And this was, day by day, al her prayere
With al humblesse of wyf hood, word, and chere. 2269
This Tereus let make his shippes yare,
And into Grece him-self is forth y-fare
Unto his fader in lawe, and gan him preye
To vouche-sauf that, for a month or tweye,
That Philomene, his wyves suster, mighte
On Progne his wyf but ones have a sighte — 2275
'And she shal come to yow again anoon.
Myself with her wol bothe come and goon,
And as myn hertes lyf I wol her kepe.'
This olde Pandion, this king, gan wepe
For tendernesse of herte, for to leve 2280
His doghter goon, and for to yive her leve;
Of al this world he lovede no-thing so;
But at the laste leve hath she to go.
For Philomene, with salte teres eke,
Gan of her fader grace to beseke 2285
To seen her suster, that her longeth so;
And him embraceth with her armes two.
And therwith-al so yong and fair was she
That, whan that Terëus saw her beautee,
And of array that ther was noon her liche, 2290
And yit of bountee was she two so riche,
He caste his fyry herte upon her so
That he wol have her, how so that hit go,
And with his wyles kneled and so preyde,
Til at the laste Pandion thus seyde: —
'Now, sone,' quod he, 'that art to me so dere, 2296
I thee betake my yonge doghter here,
That bereth the key of al my hertes lyf.
And grete wel my doghter and thy wyf,
And yive her leve somtyme for to pleye,
That she may seen me ones er I deye.'
And soothly, he hath mad him riche feste,
And to his folk, the moste and eek the leste,
That with him com; and yaf him yiftes grete,
And him conveyeth through the maister-strete 2305
Of Athenes, and to the see him broghte,
And turneth hoom; no malice he ne thoghte.
The ores pulleth forth the vessel faste,
And into Trace arriveth at the laste,
And up into a forest he her ledde, 2310
And to a cave privily him spedde;
And, in this derke cave, yif her leste,
Or leste noght, he bad her for to reste;
Of whiche her herte agroos, and seyde thus,
'Wher is my suster, brother Tereus?'
And therwith-al she wepte tenderly, 2316
And quook for fere, pale and pitously,
Right as the lamb that of the wolf is biten;
Or as the colver, that of the egle is smiten,
And is out of his clawes forth escaped,
Yet hit is afeyed and awhaped 2321
Lest hit be hent eft-sones, so sat she.

But utterly hit may non other be.
By force hath he, this traitour, doon that dede,
That he hath reft her of her maydenhede,
Maugree her heed, by strengthe and by his might.
Lo! here a dede of men, and that a right!
She cryeth 'suster!' with ful loude stevene,
And 'fader dere!' and 'help me, god in hevene!'
Al helpeth nat; and yet this false theef
Hath doon this lady yet a more mischeef,
For fere lest she sholde his shame crye,
And doon him openly a vilanye,
And with his swerd her tong of kerveth he,
And in a castel made her for to be
Ful privily in prison evermore,
And kepte her to his usage and his store,
So that she mighte him nevermore asterte.
O sely Philomene! wo thyn herte;
God wreke thee, and sende thee thy bone!
Now is hit tyme I make an ende sone.
This Tereus is to his wyf y-come,
And in his armes hath his wyf y-nome,
And pitously he weep, and shook his heed,
And swor her that he fond her suster deed;
For which this sely Progne hath swich wo,
That ny her sorweful herte brak a-two;
And thus in teres lete I Progne dwelle,
And of her suster forth I wol yow telle.
This woful lady lerned had in youthe
So that she werken and enbrouden couthe,
And weven in her stole the radevore
As hit of women hath be woned yore.
And, shortly for to seyn, she hath her fille
Of mete and drink, and clothing at her wille,
And coude eek rede, and wel y-nogh endyte,
But with a penne coude she nat wryte;
But lettres can she weven to and fro,
So that, by that the yeer was al a-go,
She had y-woven in a stamin large
How she was broght from Athenes in a barge,
And in a cave how that she was broght;
And al the thing that Tereus hath wroght,
She wafˆ hit wel, and wroot the story above,
How she was served for her suster love;
And to a knave a ring she yaf anoon,
And prayed him, by signes, for to goon
Unto the quene, and beren her that clooth,
And by signes swor him many an ooth,
She sholde him yeve what she geten mighte.
This knave anoon unto the quene him dighte,
And took hit her, and al the maner tolde.
And, whan that Progne hath this thing beholde,
No word she spak, for sorwe and eek for rage;
But feyned her to goon on pilgrimage
To Bachus temple; and, in a litel stounde,
Her dombe suster sitting hath she founde,
Weping in the castel her aloon.
Allas! the wo, the compleint, and the moon
That Progne upon her dombe suster maketh!
In armes everich of hem other taketh,
And thus I lete hem in hir sorwe dwelle.
The remenant is no charge for to telle,
For this is al and som, thus was she served,
That never harm a-gilte ne deserved
Unto this cruel man, that she of wiste.
Ye may be war of men, yif that yow liste.
For, al be that he wol nat, for his shame,
Doon so as Tereus, to lese his name,
Ne serve yow as a mordrour or a knave,
Ful litel whyle shul ye trewe him have,
That wol I seyn, al were he now my brother,
But hit so be that he may have non other.

Explicit Legenda Philomene.

VIII. THE LEGEND OF PHYLLIS.

INCIPIT LEGENDA PHILLIS.

By preve as wel as by auctoritee,
That wikked fruit cometh of a wikked tree,
That may ye finde, if that it lyketh yow.
But for this ende I speke this as now,
To telle you of false Demophon.
In love a falser herde I never non,
But-if hit were his fader Theseus.
'God, for his grace, fro swich oon kepe us!'
Thus may thise women prayen that hit here.
Now to theffect turne I of my matere.
Destroyed is of Troye the citee;
This Demophon com sailing in the see
Toward Athenes, to his paleys large;
With him com many a ship and many a barge
Ful of his folk, of which ful many oon
Is wounded sore, and seek, and wo begoon.
And they han at the sege longe y-lain.
Behinde him com a wind and eek a rain
That shoof so sore, his sail ne mighte stonde,
Him were lever than al the world a-londe,
So hunteth him the tempest to and fro.
So derk hit was, he coude nowher go;
And with a wawe brosten was his stere.
His ship was rent so lowe, in swich manere,
That carpenter ne coude hit nat amende.
The see, by nighte, as any torche brende
For wood, and posseth him now up now doun,
Til Neptune hath of him compassioun,
And Thetis, Chorus, Triton, and they alle,
And maden him upon a lond to falle,
Wher-of that Phillis lady was and quene,
Ligurgus doghter, fairer on to sene
Than is the flour again the brighte sonne.
Unnethe is Demophon to londe y-wonne,
Wayk and eek wery, and his folk forpyned
Of werinesse, and also enfamyned;
And to the deeth he almost was y-driven.
His wyse folke to conseil han him yiven
To seken help and socour of the queen,
And loken what his grace mighte been,
And maken in that lond som chevisaunce,
To kepen him fro wo and fro mischaunce.
For seek was he, and almost at the deeth;
Unnethe mighte he speke or drawe his breeth,
And lyth in Rodopeya him for to reste.
Whan he may walke, him thoughte hit was the beste
Unto the court to seken for socour.
Men knewe him wel, and diden him honour;
For at Athenes duk and lord was he,
As Theseus his fader hadde y-be,
That in his tyme was of greet renoun,
No man so greet in al his regioun;
And lyk his fader of face and of stature,
And fals of love; hit com him of nature;
As doth the fox Renard, the foxes sone,
Of kinde he coude his olde faders wone
Withoute lore, as can a drake swimme,
Whan hit is caught and caried to the brimme.
This honourable Phillis doth him chere,
Her lyketh wel his port and his manere.
But for I am agroted heer-biforn
To wryte of hem that been in love forsworn,
And eek to haste me in my legende,
Which to performe god me grace sende,
Therfor I passe shortly in this wyse;
Ye han wel herd of Theseus devyse
In the betraising of fair Adriane,
That of her pite kepte him from his bane.
At shorte wordes, right so Demophon
The same wey, the same path hath gon
That dide his false fader Theseus.
For unto Phillis hath he sworen thus,
To wedden her, and her his trouthe plighte,
And piked of her al the good he mighte,
Whan he was hool and sound and hadde his reste;

And doth with Phillis what so that him leste.
And wel coude I, yif that me leste so,
Tellen al his doing to and fro.
He seide, unto his contree moste he saile,
For ther he wolde her wedding apparaile
As fil to her honour and his also.
And openly he took his leve tho,
And hath her sworn, he wolde nat soiorne,
But in a month he wolde again retorne.
And in that lond let make his ordinaunce
As verray lord, and took the obeisaunce
Wel and hoomly, and let his shippes dighte,
And hoom he goth the nexte wey he mighte;
For unto Phillis yit ne com he noght.
And that hath she so harde and sore aboght,
Allas! that, as the stories us recorde,
She was her owne deeth right with a corde,
Whan that she saw that Demophon her trayed.
But to him first she wroot and faste him prayed
He wolde come, and her deliver of peyne,
As I reherse shal a word or tweyne.
Me list nat vouche-sauf on him to swinke,
Ne spende on him a penne ful of inke,
For fals in love was he, right as his syre;
The devil sette hir soules bothe a-fyre!
But of the lettre of Phillis wol I wryte
A word or tweyne, al-thogh hit be but lyte.
'Thyn hostesse,' quod she, 'O Demophon,
Thy Phillis, which that is so wo begon,
Of Rodopeye, upon yow moot compleyne,
Over the terme set betwix us tweyne,
That ye ne holden forward, as ye seyde;
Your anker, which ye in our haven leyde,
Highte us, that ye wolde comen, out of doute,
Or that the mone ones wente aboute.
But tymes foure the mone hath hid her face
Sin thilke day ye wente fro this place,
And foure tymes light the world again.
But for al that, yif I shal soothly sain,
Yit hath the streem of Sitho nat y-broght
From Athenes the ship; yit comth hit noght.
And, yif that ye the terme rekne wolde,
As I or other trewe lovers sholde,
I pleyne not, god wot, beforn my day.' —
But al her lettre wryten I ne may
By ordre, for hit were to me a charge;
Her lettre was right long and ther-to large;
But here and there in ryme I have hit laid,
Ther as me thoughte that she wel hath said. —
She seide, 'thy sailes comen nat again,
Ne to thy word ther nis no fey certein;
But I wot why ye come nat,' quod she;
'For I was of my love to you so free.
And of the goddes that ye han forswore,
Yif that hir vengeance falle on yow therfore,
Ye be nat suffisaunt to bere the peyne.
To moche trusted I, wel may I pleyne,
Upon your linage and your faire tonge,
And on your teres falsly out y-wronge.
How coude ye wepe so by craft?' quod she;
'May ther swiche teres feyned be?
Now certes, yif ye wolde have in memorie,
Hit oghte be to yow but litel glorie
To have a sely mayde thus betrayed!
To god,' quod she, 'preye I, and ofte have prayed,
That hit be now the grettest prys of alle,
And moste honour that ever yow shal befalle!
And whan thyn olde auncestres peynted be,
In which men may hir worthinesse see,
Than, preye I god, thou peynted be also,
That folk may reden, for-by as they go,
"Lo! this is he, that with his flaterye
Betrayed hath and doon her vilanye
That was his trewe love in thoghte and dede!"
But sothly, of oo point yit may they rede,
That ye ben lyk your fader as in this;

For he begyled Adriane, y-wis,
With swiche an art and swiche sotelte
As thou thy-selven hast begyled me.
As in that point, al-thogh hit be nat fayr,
Thou folwest him, certein, and art his eyr.
But sin thus sinfully ye me begyle,
My body mote ye seen, within a whyle,
Right in the haven of Athenes fletinge,
With-outen sepulture and buryinge;
Thogh ye ben harder then is any stoon.'

And, whan this lettre was forth sent anoon,
And knew how brotel and how fals he was,
She for dispeyr for-dide herself, allas!
Swich sorwe hath she, for she besette her so.
Be war, ye women, of your sotil fo,
Sin yit this day men may ensample see;
And trusteth, as in love, no man but me.

Explicit Legenda Phillis.

IX. THE LEGEND OF HYPERMNESTRA.

INCIPIT LEGENDA YPERMISTRE.

In Grece whylom weren brethren two,
Of whiche that oon was called Danao,
That many a sone hath of his body wonne,
As swiche false lovers ofte conne.
Among his sones alle ther was oon
That aldermost he lovede of everichoon.
And whan this child was born, this Danao
Shoop him a name, and called him Lino.
That other brother called was Egiste,
That was of love as fals as ever him liste,
And many a doghter gat he in his lyve;
Of which he gat upon his righte wyve
A doghter dere, and dide her for to calle
Ypermistra, yongest of hem alle;
The whiche child, of her nativitee,
To alle gode thewes born was she,
As lyked to the goddes, or she was born,
That of the shefe she sholde be the corn;
The Wirdes, that we clepen Destinee,
Hath shapen her that she mot nedes be
Pitouse, sadde, wyse, and trewe as steel;
And to this woman hit accordeth weel.
For, though that Venus yaf her greet beautee,
With Iupiter compouned so was she
That conscience, trouthe, and dreed of shame,
And of her wyfhood for to kepe her name,
This, thoughte her, was felicitee as here.
And rede Mars was, that tyme of the yere,
So feble, that his malice is him raft,
Repressed hath Venus his cruel craft;
What with Venus and other oppressioun
Of houses, Mars his venim is adoun,
That Ypermistra dar nat handle a knyf
In malice, thogh she sholde lese her lyf.
But natheles, as heven gan tho turne,
To badde aspectes hath she of Saturne,
That made her for to deyen in prisoun,
As I shal after make mencioun.
To Danao and Egistes also —
Al-thogh so be that they were brethren two,
For thilke tyme nas spared no linage —
Hit lyked hem to maken mariage
Betwix Ypermistra and him Lino,
And casten swiche a day hit shal be so;
And ful acorded was hit witterly;
The array is wroght, the tyme is faste by.
And thus Lino hath of his fadres brother
The doghter wedded, and eche of hem hath other.
The torches brennen and the lampes brighte,
The sacrifices been ful redy dighte;
Thencens out of the fyre reketh sote,
The flour, the leef is rent up by the rote
To maken garlands and corounes hye;
Ful is the place of soun of minstralcye,
Of songes amorous of mariage,
As thilke tyme was the pleyn usage.
And this was in the paleys of Egiste,
That in his hous was lord, right as him liste;

And thus the day they dryven to an ende;
The frendes taken leve, and hoom they wende.
The night is come, the bryd shal go to bedde;
Egiste to his chambre faste him spedde,
And privily he let his doghter calle.
Whan that the hous was voided of hem alle,
He loked on his doghter with glad chere,
And to her spak, as ye shul after here.
'My righte doghter, trĕsor of myn herte!
Sin first that day that shapen was my sherte,
Or by the fatal sustren had my dom,
So ny myn herte never thing me com
As thou, myn Ypermistra, doghter dere!
Tak heed what I thy fader sey thee here,
And werk after thy wyser ever-mo.
For alderfirste, doghter, I love thee so
That al the world to me nis half so leef;
Ne I nolde rede thee to thy mischeef
For al the gode under the colde mone;
And what I mene, hit shal be seid right sone,
With protestacioun, as in this wyse,
That, but thou do as I shal thee devyse,
Thou shalt be deed, by him that al hath wroght!
At shorte wordes, thou nescapest noght
Out of my paleys, or that thou be deed,
But thou consente and werke after my reed;
Tak this to thee for ful conclusioun.'
This Ypermistra caste her eyen doun,
And quook as dooth the leef of aspe grene;
Deed wex her hewe, and lyk as ash to sene,
And seyde, 'lord and fader, al your wille,
After my might, got wot, I shal fulfille,
So hit to me be no confusioun.'
'I nil,' quod he, 'have noon excepcioun;'
And out he caughte a knyf, as rasour kene;
'Hyd this,' quod he, 'that hit be nat y-sene;
And, whan thyn husbond is to bedde y-go,
Whyl that he slepeth, cut his throte a-two.
For in my dremes hit is warned me
How that my nevew shal my bane be,
But whiche I noot, wherfor I wol be siker.
Yif thou sey nay, we two shul have a biker
As I have seyd, by him that I have sworn.'
This Ypermistra hath ny her wit forlorn;
And, for to passen harmles of that place,
She graunted him; ther was non other grace.
And therwith-al a costrel taketh he,
And seyde, 'herof a draught, or two or three,
Yif him to drinke, whan he goth to reste,
And he shal slepe as longe as ever thee leste,
The narcotiks and opies been so stronge:
And go thy wey, lest that him thinke longe.'
Out comth the bryd, and with ful sober chere,
As is of maidens ofte the manere,
To chambre is broght with revel and with songe,
And shortly, lest this tale be to longe,
This Lino and she ben sone broght to bedde;
And every wight out at the dore him spedde.
The night is wasted, and he fel a-slepe;
Ful tenderly beginneth she to wepe.
She rist her up, and dredfully she quaketh,
As doth the braunche that Zephirus shaketh,
And husht were alle in Argon that citee.
As cold as any frost now wexeth she;
For pite by the herte her streyneth so,
And dreed of deeth doth her so moche wo,
That thryes doun she fil in swiche a were.

She rist her up, and stakereth heer and there,
And on her handes faste loketh she.
'Allas! and shul my handes blody be?
I am a maid, and, as by my nature,
And by my semblant and by my vesture,
Myn handes been nat shapen for a knyf,
As for to reve no man fro his lyf.
What devil have I with the knyf to do?
And shal I have my throte corve a-two?
Than shal I blede, allas! and me beshende;
And nedes cost this thing mot have an ende;
Or he or I mot nedes lese our lyf.
Now certes,' quod she, 'sin I am his wyf,
And hath my feith, yit is it bet for me
For to be deed in wyfly honestee
Than be a traitour living in my shame.
Be as be may, for ernest or for game,
He shal awake, and ryse and go his way
Out at this goter, or that hit be day!'—
And weep ful tenderly upon his face,

And in her armes gan him to embrace,
And him she roggeth and awaketh softe;
And at the window leep he fro the lofte
Whan she hath warned him, and doon him bote.
This Lino swifte was, and light of fote,
And from his wyf he ran a ful good pas.
This sely woman is so wayk, allas!
And helples so, that, or that she fer wente,
Her cruel fader dide her for to hente.
Allas! Lino! why art thou so unkinde?
Why ne haddest thou remembred in thy minde
To taken her, and lad her forth with thee?
For, whan she saw that goon awey was he,
And that she mighte nat so faste go,
Ne folwen him, she sette her doun right tho,
Til she was caught and fetered in prisoun.
This tale is seid for this conclusioun . . . .

[*Unfinished.*]

A TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE.

PROLOGUS.

LITELL Lowis my sone, I have perceived wel by certeyne evidences thyn abilite to lerne sciencez touchinge noumbres and proporcioun; and as wel considere I thy bisy preyere in special to lerne the Tretis of the Astrolabie. Than, for as mechel as a philosofre seith, 'he wrappeth him in his frend, that condescendeth to the rightful preyers of his frend,' ther-for have I geven thee a suffisaunt Astrolabie as for oure orizonte, compowned after the latitude of Oxenford; up-on which, by mediacion of this litel tretis, I purpose to teche thee a certein nombre of conclusions apertening to the same instrument. I seye a certein of conclusioun, for three causes. The furste cause is this: truste wel that alle the conclusioun that han ben founde, or elles possibly mighten be founde in so noble an instrument as an Astrolabie, ben un-knowe perfitly to any mortal man in this regioun, as I suppose. A-nother cause is this; that sothly, in any tretis of the Astrolabie that I have seyn, there ben some conclusions that wole nat in alle thinges performen hir bihestes; and some of hem ben to harde to thy tendre age of ten yeer to conseyve. This tretis, divided in fyve parties, wole I shewe thee under ful lighte rewles and naked wordes in English; for Latin ne canstow yit but smal, my lyte sone. But natheles, suffyse to thee thise trewe conclusioun in English, as wel as suffyseth to thise noble clerkes Grekes thise same conclusioun in Greek, and to Arabiens in Arabik, and to Iewes in Ebrew, and to the Latin folk in Latin; whiche Latin folk han hem furst out of othre diverse langages, and writen in hir owne tonge, that is to sein, in Latin. And god wot, that in alle thise langages, and in many mo, han thise conclusioun ben suffisantly lerned and taught, and yit by diverse rewles, right as diverse pathes leden diverse folk the righte wey to Rome. Now wol I prey meekly every discret persone that redeth or hereth this litel tretis, to have my rewde endyting for excused, and my superfluite of wordes, for two causes. The firste cause is, for that curious endyting and hard sentence is ful hevy atones for swich a child to lerne. And the seconde cause is this, that sothly me semeth betre to wryten un-to a child twyes a good sentence, than he for-gete it ones. And Lowis, yif so be that I shewe thee in my lighte English as trewe conclusioun touching this matere, and naught only as trewe but as many and as subtil conclusioun as ben shewed in Latin in any commune tretis of the Astrolabie, con me the more thank; and preye god save the king, that is lord of this langage, and alle that him feyth bereth and obeyeth, everech in his degree, the more and the lasse. But considere wel, that I ne usurpe nat to have founde this werk of my labour or of myn engin. I nam but a lewd compilatour of the labour of olde Astrologiens,

and have hit translated in myn English only for thy doctrine; and with this swerd shal I sleen envye.

I. The firste partie of this tretis shal reherse the figures and the membres of thyn Astrolabie, bi-cause that thou shalt han the grettre knowing of thyn owne instrument.

II. The second partie shal teche thee werken the verrey practik of the forseide conclusiouns, as ferforth and as narwe as may be shewed in so smal an instrument portatif aboute. For wel wot every astrologien that smalest fraccions ne wol nat ben shewed in so smal an instrument, as in subtil tables calculed for a cause.

III. The thridde partie shal contienen diverse tables of longitudes and latitudes of sterres fixe for the Astrolabie, and tables of declinacions of the sonne, and tables of longitudes of citeez and of townes; and as wel for the governance of a clokke as for to finde the altitude meridian; and many another notable conclusioun, after the kalendres of the reverent clerkes, frere I. Somer and frere N. Lenne.

IV. The ferthe partie shal ben a theorik to declare the moevinge of the celestial bodies with the causes. The whiche ferthe partie in special shal shewen a table of the verray moeving of the mone from houre to houre, every day and in every signe, after thyn almenak; upon which table ther folwith a canon, suffisant to teche as wel the maner of the wyrking of that same conclusioun, as to knowe in oure orizonte with which degree of the zodiac that the mone ariseth in any latitude; and the arising of any planete after his latitude fro the ecliptik lyne.

V. The fifte partie shal ben an introductorie after the statutz of oure doctours, in which thou maist lerne a gret part of the general rewles of theorik in astrologie. In which fifte partie shaltow finde tables of equacions of houses after the latitude of Oxenford; and tables of dignetes of planetes, and other noteful thinges, yif god wol vouch-sauf and his modur the mayde, mo than I be-hete, &c.

PART I.

HERE BIGINNETH THE DESCRIPCION OF THE ASTROLABIE.

1. Thyn Astrolabie hath a ring to putten on the thoumbe of thy right hand in taking the heighte of thinges. And tak keep, for from hennes-forthward, I wol clepe the heighte of any thing that is taken by thy rewle, the altitude, with-oute mo wordes.

2. This ring renneth in a maner turet, fast to the moder of thyn Astrolabie, in so rowm a space that hit desturbeth nat the instrument to hangen after his righte centre.

3. The Moder of thyn Astrolabie is the thikkeste plate, perced with a large hole, that resseyveth in hir wombe the-thinne plates compowned for diverse clymatz, and thy riet shapen in manere of a net or of a webbe of a loppe; and for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

4. This moder is devyded on the bak-half with a lyne, that cometh dessendinge fro the ring down to the nethereste bordure. The whiche lyne, fro the for-seide ring un-to the centre of the large hole amidde, is cleped the south lyne, or elles the lyne meridional. And the remenant of this lyne downe to the bordure is cleped the north lyne, or elles the lyne of midnight. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

5. Over-thwart this for-seide longe lyne, ther crosseth him another lyne of the same lengthe from est to west. Of the whiche lyne, from a litel croys + in the bordure un-to the centre of the large hole, is cleped the Est lyne, or elles the lyne Orientale; and the remenant of this lyne fro the forseide + un-to the bordure, is cleped the West lyne, or the lyne Occidentale. Now hastow here the foure quarters of thin Astrolabie, devyded after the

foure principals plages or quarters of the firmament. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

6. The est side of thyn Astrolabie is cleped the right side, and the west side is cleped the left side. Forget nat this, litel Lowis. Put the ring of thyn Astrolabie upon the thoumbe of thy right hand, and thanne wole his right syde be toward thy left syde, and his left syde wol be toward thy right syde; tak this rewle general, as wel on the bak as on the wombe-side. Upon the ende of this este lyne, as I first seide, is marked a litel +, wher-as evere-mo generaly is considered the entring of the first degree in which the sonne aryseth. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

7. Fro this litel + up to the ende of the lyne meridional, under the ring, shaltow finden the bordure devyded with 90 degrees; and by that same proporcioun is every quarter of thin Astrolabie devyded. Over the whiche degrees ther ben noumbres of augrim, that devyden thilke same degrees fro fyve to fyve, as sheweth by longe strykes by-twene. Of whiche longe strykes the space by-twene contienith a mile-wey. And every degree of the bordure contieneth foure minutes, that is to seyn, minutes of an houre. And for more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

8. Under the compas of thilke degrees ben writen the names of the Twelve Signes, as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces; and the nombres of the degrees of tho signes ben writen in augrim above, and with longe devisiouns, fro fyve to fyve; devyded fro tyme that the signe entreth un-to the laste ende. But understond wel, that thise degrees of signes ben everich of hem considered of 60 minutes, and every minute of 60 secondes, and so forth in-to smale fraccions infinit, as seith Alkabucius. And ther-for, know wel, that a degree of the bordure contieneth foure minutes, and a degree of a signe contieneth 60 minutes, and have this in minde. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

9. Next this folweth the Cercle of the Dayes, that ben figured in maner of degrees, that contienen in noumbre 365; divyded also with longe strykes fro fyve to fyve, and the nombres in augrim writen under that cercle. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

10. Next the Cercle of the Dayes, folweth the Cercle of the names of the Monthes; that is to seyn, Ianuare, Februare, Marcius, Aprile, Mayus, Iuin, Iulius, Augustus, Septembre, October, Novembre, Decembre. The names of thise monthes were cleped in Arabiens, somme for hir propretees, and some by statutz of lordes, some by other lordes of Rome. Eek of thise monthes, as lyked to Iulius Cesar and to Cesar Augustus, some were compowned of diverse nombres of dayes, as Iuil and August. Thanne hath Ianuare 31 dayes, Februare 28, March 31, Aprille 30, May 31, Iunius 30, Iulius 31, Augustus 31, September 30, Octobre 31, Novembre 30, December 31. Natheles, al-though that Iulius Cesar took 2 dayes out of Feverer and put hem in his moneth of Iuille, and Augustus Cesar cleped the moneth of August after his name, and ordeyned it of 31 dayes, yit truste wel, that the sonne dwelleth ther-for nevere the more ne lesse in oon signe than in another.

11. Than folwen the names of the Halidays in the Kalender, and next hem the lettres of the Abc. on which they fallen. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

12. Next the forseide Cercle of the Abc., under the cros-lyne, is marked the scale, in maner of two squyres, or elles in manere of laddres, that serveth by hise 12 poyntes and his devisiouns of ful many a subtil conclusioun. Of this forseide scale, fro the crous-lyne un-to the verre angle,

is cleped *umbra versa*, and the nether partie is cleped the *umbra recta*, or elles *umbra extensa*. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

13. Thanne hastow a brood Rewle, that hath on either ende a square plate perced with a certein holes, some more and some lesse, to resseyven the stremes of the sonne by day, and eek by mediacioun of thyn eye, to knowe the altitude of sterres by nighte. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

14. Thanne is ther a large Pyn, in maner of an extree, that goth thorow the hole that halt the tables of the clymates and the riet in the wombe of the Moder, thorw which Pyn ther goth a litel wegge which that is cleped 'the hors,' that streyneth alle thise parties to-hepe; this forseide grete Pyn, in maner of an extree, is imagined to be the Pol Artik in thyn Astrolabie. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

15. The wombe-side of thyn Astrolabie is also devyded with a longe croys in foure quarters from est to west, fro south to north, fro right syde to left syde, as is the bak-syde. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

16. The bordure of which wombeside is devyded fro the poynt of the est lyne un-to the poynt of the south lyne under the ring, in 90 degres; and by that same proporcioun is every quarter devyded as is the bak-syde, that amonteth 360 degrees. And understond wel, that degrees of this bordure ben answering and consentrik to the degrees of the Equinoxial, that is devyded in the same nombre as every othere cercle is in the heye hevene. This same bordure is devyded also with 23 lettres capitals and a smal croys + above the south lyne, that sheweth the 24 houres equals of the clokke; and, as I have said, 5 of thise degrees maken a mile-wey, and 3 mile-wey maken an houre. And every degree of this bordure conteneth 4 minutes, and every minut 60 secoundes; now have I told thee twye. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

17. The plate under thy riet is descryved with 3 principal cercles; of whiche the leste is cleped the cercle of Cancer, by-cause that the heved of Cancer turneth evermor consentrik up-on the same cercle. In this heved of Cancer is the grettest declinacioun northward of the sonne. And ther-for is he cleped the Solsticioun of Somer; whiche declinacioun, aftur Ptholome, is 23 degrees and 50 minutes, as wel in Cancer as in Capricorne. This signe of Cancre is cleped the Tropik of Somer, of *tropos*, that is to seyn 'agaynward;' for thanne by-ginneth the sonne to passe fro us-ward. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

The middel cercle in wydnesse, of thise 3, is cleped the Cercle Equinoxial; up-on whiche turneth evermo the hedes of Aries and Libra. And understond wel, that evermo this Cercle Equinoxial turneth iustly fro verrey est to verrey west; as I have shewed thee in the spere solide. This same cercle is cleped also the Weyere, *equator*, of the day; for whan the sonne is in the hevedes of Aries and Libra, than ben the dayes and the nightes ilyke of lengthe in al the world. And ther-fore ben thise two signes called the Equinoxies. And alle that moeveth with-in the hevedes of thise Aries and Libra, his moeving is cleped northward; and alle that moeveth with-oute thise hevedes, his moeving is cleped southward as fro the equinoxial. Tak keep of thise latitudes north and sowth, and forget it nat. By this Cercle Equinoxial ben considered the 24 houres of the clokke; for everemo the arysing of 15 degrees of the equinoxial maketh an houre equal of the clokke. This equinoxial is cleped the girdel of the firste moeving, or elles of the *angulus primi motus vel primi mobilis*. And *nota*, that firste

moeving is cleped 'moeving' of the firste moevable of the 8 spere, whiche moeving is fro est to west, and eft agayn in-to est; also it is clepid 'girdel' of the first moeving, for it departeth the firste moevable, that is to seyn, the spere, in two ilyke parties, evene-distantz fro the poles of this world.

The wydeste of thise three principal cercles is cleped the Cercle of Capricorne, by-cause that the heved of Capricorne turneth evermo consentrik up-on the same cercle. In the heved of this for-seide Capricorne is the grettest declinacioun southward of the sonne, and ther-for is it cleped the Solsticioun of Winter. This signe of Capricorne is also cleped the Tropik of Winter, for thanne byginneth the sonne to come agayn to us-ward. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

18. Upon this forseide plate ben compassed certein cercles that highten Almicanteras, of which som of hem semen perfit cercles, and somme semen inperfit. The centre that standith a-middes the narwest cercle is cleped the Senith; and the netherest cercle, or the firste cercle, is clepid the Orisonte, that is to seyn, the cercle that devydeth the two emisperies, that is, the partie of the hevene a-bove the erthe and the partie be-nethe. Thise Almicanteras ben compowned by two and two, al-be-it so that on divers Astrolabies some Almicanteras ben devyded by oon, and some by two, and somme by three, after the quantite of the Astrolabie. This forseide senith is imagened to ben the verrey point over the crowne of thyn heved; and also this senith is the verrey pool of the orisonte in every regioun. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

19. From this senith, as it semeth, ther come a maner crokede strykes lyke to the clawes of a loppe, or elles like to the werk of a womanes calle, in kerving overthwart the Almikanteras. And thise same strykes or divisiouns ben cleped Azimuthz. And they devyden the orisonte of thyn Astrolabie in four and twenty devisiouns. And thise Azimutz serven to knowe the costes of the firmament, and to othre conclusiouns, as for to knowe the cenith of the sonne and of every sterre. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

20. Next thise azimutz, under the Cercle of Cancer, ben ther twelve devisiouns embelif, moche like to the shap of the azimutes, that shewen the spaces of the houres of planetes; and for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

21. The Riet of thyn Astrolabie with thy zodiak, shapen in maner of a net or of a loppe-webbe after the olde descripcioun, which thow mayst tornen up and doun as thy-self lyketh, conteneth certein nombre of sterres fixes, with hir longitudes and latitudes determinat; yif so be that the makere have nat erred. The names of the sterres ben writen in the margin of the riet ther as they sitte; of whiche sterres the smale poynt is cleped the Centre. And understond also that alle sterres sittinge with-in the zodiak of thyn Astrolabie ben cleped 'sterres of the north,' for they arysen by northe the est lyne. And alle the remenant fixed, out of the zodiak, ben cleped 'sterres of the south;' but I sey nat that they arysen alle by southe the est lyne; witnesse on Aldeberan and Algomeysa. Generally understond this rewle, that thilke sterres that ben cleped sterres of the north arysen rather than the degree of hir longitude, and alle the sterres of the south arysen after the degree of hir longitude; this is to seyn, sterres fixed in thyn Astrolabie. The mesure of this longitude of sterres is taken in the lyne ecliptik of hevene, under which lyne, whan that the sonne and the mone ben lyne-right or elles in the superfice of this lyne, than is the eclips of the sonne or of the mone; as I shal de-

clare, and eek the cause why. But sothly the Ecliptik Lyne of thy zodiak is the outtereste bordure of thy zodiak, ther the degrees ben marked.

Thy Zodiak of thyn Astrolabie is shapen as a compas which that conteneth a large brede, as after the quantitē of thyn Astrolabie; in ensample that the zodiak in hevene is imagened to ben a superfice contening a latitude of twelve degrees, wheras al the remenant of cercles in the hevene ben imagined verrey lynes with-oute eny latitude. Amiddes this celestial zodiak ys imagined a lyne, which that is cleped the Ecliptik Lyne, under which lyne is evermo the wey of the sonne. Thus ben ther six degrees of the zodiak on that on side of the lyne, and six degrees on that other. This zodiak is devided in twelve principal devisiouns, that departen the twelve signes. And, for the streitnes of thin Astrolabie, than is every smal devisioun in a signe departid by two degrees and two; I mene degrees contening sixty minutes. And this forseide hevenissh zodiak is cleped the Cercle of the Signes, or the Cercle of the Bestes; for *zodia* in langage of Greek sowneth 'bestes' in Latin tonge; and in the zodiak ben the twelve signes that han names of bestes; or elles, for whan the sonne entreth in any of the signes, he taketh the propretee of swich bestes; or elles, for that the sterres that ben there fixed ben disposed in signes of bestes, or shape like bestes; or elles, whan the planetes ben under thilke signes, they causen us by hir influence operaciouns and effectes lyk to the operaciouns of bestes. And understonde also, that whan an hot planete cometh in-to an hot signe, than encresseth his hete; and yif a planete be cold, thanne amenuseth his coldnesse, because of the hote signe. And by this conclusioun maystow take ensample in alle the signes, be they moist or drye, or moeble or fix; rekening the qualitee of the planete as I first seide. And everich of thise twelve signes hath respecte to a certein parcelle of the body of a man and hath it in governance; as Aries hath thyn heved, and Taurus thy nekke and thy throte, Gemini thyn armholes and thyn armes, and so forth; as shal be shewed more pleyn in the fifte partie of this tretis. This zodiak, which that is part of the eighte spere, over-kerveth the equinoxial; and he over-kerveth him again in evene parties; and that on half declineth southward, and that other northward, as pleynly declareth the tretis of the spere. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

22. Thanne hastow a label, that is schapen lyk a rewle, save that it is streit and hath no plates on either ende with holes; but, with the smale point of the forseide label, shaltow calcule thyne equaciouns in the bordure of thin Astrolabie, as by thyn almury. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

23. Thyn Almury is cleped the Denticle of Capricorne, or elles the Calculer. This same Almury sit fix in the hed of Capricorne, and it serveth of many a necessarie conclusioun in equaciouns of thinges, as shal be shewed; and for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

Here endeth the descripciōun of the Astrolabie.

PART II.

HERE BIGINNEN THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE ASTROLABIE.

1. *To fynde the degree in which the sonne is day by day, after hir cours a-boute.*

[*Hic incipiunt Conclusiones Astrolabii; et prima est ad inveniendum gradus solis in quibus singulis diebus secundum cursum sol est existens.*]

Rekene and knowe which is the day of thy monthe; and ley thy rewle up that same day; and thanne wol

the verray point of thy rewle sitten in the bordure, up-on the degree of thy sonne. Ensample as thus; the yeer of oure lord 1391, the 12 day of March at midday, I wolde knowe the degree of the sonne. I soughte in the bak-half of myn Astrolabie, and fond the cercle of the dayes, the which I knowe by the names of the monthes writen under the same cercle. Tho leide I my rewle over this forseide day, and fond the point of my rewle in the bordure up-on the firste degree of Aries, a litel with-in the degree; and thus knowe I this conclusioun. Another day, I wolde knowe the degree of my sonne, and this was at midday in the 13 day of Decembre; I fond the day of the monthe in maner as I seide; tho leide I my rewle up-on this forseide 13 day, and fond the point of my rewle in the bordure up-on the first degree of Capricorne, a lite with-in the degree; and than hadde I of this conclusioun the ful experience. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

2. To knowe the altitude of the sonne, or of othre celestial bodies.

[*De altitudine solis et aliorum corporum supra celestium.*]

Put the ring of thyn Astrolabie up-on thy right thoumbe, and turne thy lift syde agayn the light of the sonne. And remeve thy rewle up and doun, til that the stremes of the sonne shyne thorgh bothe holes of thy rewle. Loke thanne how many degrees thy rewle is areised fro the litel crois up-on thyn est line, and tak ther the altitude of thy sonne. And in this same wyse maistow knowe by nighte the altitude of the mone, or of brighte sterres. This chapitre is so general ever in oon, that ther nedith no more declaracion; but forget it nat. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

3. To knowe every tyme of the day by light of the sonne, and every tyme of the night by the sterres fixe, and eke to knowe by night or by day the degree of any signe that assendeth on the Est Orisonte, which that is cleped communly the Assendent, or elles Oruscupum.

[*Ad cognoscendum quodlibet tempus diei per solis indicacionem, et quodlibet tempus noctis per quasdam stellas in celo fixas; ac eciam ad inveniendum et cognoscendum signum super orizontem qui communiter vocatur ascendens.*]

Tak the altitude of the sonne whan thee list, as I have said; and set the degree of the sonne, in cas that it be by-forn the middel of the day, among thyn almikanteras on the est side of thyn Astrolabie; and yif it be after the middel of the day, set the degree of thy sonne up-on the west side; tak this manere of setting for a general rewle, ones for evere. And whan thou hast set the degree of thy sonne up as many almikanteras of heyghte as was the altitude of the sonne taken by thy rewle, ley over thy label, up-on the degree of the sonne; and thanne wol the point of thy label sitten in the bordure, up-on the verrey tyd of the day. Ensample as thus: the yeer of oure lord 1391, the 12 day of March, I wold knowe the tyd of the day. I took the altitude of my sonne, and fond that it was 25 degrees and 30 of minutes of heyghte in the bordure on the bak-syde. Tho turnede I myn Astrolabie, and by cause that it was by-forn midday, I turnede my riet, and sette the degree of the sonne, that is to seyn, the 1 degree of Aries, on the right syde of myn Astrolabie, up-on that 25 degrees and 30 of minutes of heyghte among myn almikanteras; tho leide I my label up-on the degree of my sonne, and fond the poynte of my label in the bordure, up-on a capital lettre that is cleped an X; tho rekened I alle the capitalles lettres fro the lyne of midnight un-to this forseide lettre X, and fond that it was

9 of the clokke of the day. Tho loked I down up-on the est orisonte, and fond there the 20 degree of Geminis assending; which that I tok for myn assendent. And in this wyse hadde I the experience for ever-mo in which maner I sholde knowe the tyd of the day, and eek myn assendent. Tho wolde I wite the same night folwing the hour of the night, and wroughte in this wyse. Among an heep of sterris fixe, it lyked me for to take the altitude of the feire white sterre that is cleped Alhabor; and fond hir sitting on the west side of the lyne of midday, 18 degres of heighte taken by my rewle on the bak-syde. Tho sette I the centre of this Alhabor up-on 18 degrees among myn almikanteras, up-on the west syde; by-cause that she was founden on the west syde. Tho leide I my label over the degree of the sonne that was descended under the weste orisonte, and rikened alle the lettres capitals fro the lyne of midday un-to the point of my label in the bordure; and fond that it was passed 8 of the clokke the space of 2 degrees. Tho loked I doun up-on myn est orisonte, and fond ther 23 degrees of Libra assending, whom I tok for myn assendent; and thus lerned I to knowe ones for ever in which manere I shuld come to the houre of the night and to myn assendent; as verreyly as may be taken by so smal an instrument. But natheles, in general, wolde I warne thee for evere, ne mak thee nevere bold to have take a iust ascendent by thyn Astrolabie, or elles to have set iustly a clokke, whan any celestial body by which that thow wenest governe thilke thinges ben ney the south lyne; for trust wel, whan that the sonne is ney the meridional lyne, the degree of the sonne renneth so longe consentrik up-on the almikanteras, that sothly thou shalt erre fro the iust assendent. The same conclusioun sey I by the centre of any sterre fix by night; and more-over, by experience, I wot wel that in oure orisonte, from 11 of the clokke un-to oon of the clokke, in taking of a iust assendent in a potatif Astrolabie, hit is to hard to knowe. I mene, from 11 of the clokke biforn the houre of noon til oon of the clok next folwing. And for the more declaracion, lo here thy figure.

4. *Special declaracion of the assendent.*

[*Specialis declaracio de ascendente.*]

The assendent sothly, as wel in alle nativitez as in questiouns and elecciouns of tymes, is a thing which that thise astrologiens gretly observen; wher-fore me semeth convenient, sin that I speke of the assendent, to make of it special declaracioun. The assendent sothly, to take it at the largeste, is thilke degree that assendeth at any of thise forseide tymes upon the est orisonte; and there-for, yif that any planet assende at that same tyme in thilke for-seide degree of his longitude, men seyn that thilke planete is *in horoscopo*. But sothly, the hous of the assendent, that is to seyn, the firste hous or the est angle, is a thing more brood and large. For after the statutz of astrologiens, what celestial body that is 5 degres above thilk degree that assendeth, or with-in that noumbre, that is to seyn, nere the degree that assendeth, yit rikne they thilke planet in the assendent. And what planete that is under thilke degree that assendith the space of 25 degrees, yit seyn they that thilke planete is lyk to him that is in the hous of the assendent; but sothly, yif he passe the bondes of thise forseide spaces, above or bynethe, they seyn that the planete is failling fro the assendent. Yit sein thise astrologiens, that the assendent, and eke the lord of the assendent, may be shapen for to be fortunat or infortunat, as thus: a fortunat assendent clepen they whan that no wykkid planete, as Saturne or Mars, or elles the Tail of the Dragoun, is in the hous of the assendent, ne

that no wikked planete have non aspecte of enemite up-on the assendent; but they wol caste that they have a fortunat planete in hir assendent and yit in his felicitee, and than sey they that it is wel. Forther-over, they seyn that the infortuning of an assendent is the contrairie of thise forseide thinges. The lord of the assendent, sey they, that he is fortunat, whan he is in good place fro the assendent as in angle; or in a succedent, where-as he is in his dignitee and conforted with frendly aspectes of planetes and wel resceived, and eek that he may seen the assendent, and that he be nat retrograd ne combust, ne ioigned with no shrewe in the same signe; ne that he be nat in his descencioun, ne ioigned with no planete in his discencioun, ne have up-on him non aspecte infortunat; and than sey they that he is wel. Natheles, thise ben observaunces of iudicial matiere and rytes of payens, in which my spirit ne hath no feith, ne no knowing of hir *horoscopum;* for they seyn that every signe is departed in 3 evene parties by 10 degrees, and thilke porcioun they clepe a Face. And al-thogh that a planete have a latitude fro the ecliptik, yit sey some folk, so that the planete aryse in that same signe with any degree of the forseide face in which his longitude is rekned, that yit is the planete *in horoscopo*, be it in nativite or in elecciouu, &c. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

5. *To knowe the verrey equacioun of the degree of the sonne, yif so be that it falle by-twixe thyn Almikanteras.*

[*Ad cognoscendum veram equacionem de gradu solis, si contigerit fore in duas Almicanteras.*]

For as moche as the almikanteras in thyn Astrolabie been compouned by two and two, where-as some almikanteras in sondry Astrolabies ben compouned by on and on, or elles by two and two, it is necessarie to thy lerning to teche thee first to knowe and worke with thyn owne instrument. Wher-for, whan that the degree of thy sonne falleth by-twixe two almikanteras, or elles yif thyn almikanteras ben graven with over gret a point of a compas, (for bothe thise thinges may causen errour as wel in knowing of the tyd of the day as of the verrey assendent), thou most werken in this wyse. Set the degree of thy sonne up-on the heyer almikanteras of bothe, and waite wel wher as thin almury toucheth the bordure, and set ther a prikke of inke. Set doun agayn the degree of thy sonne up-on the nethere almikanteras of bothe, and set ther another prikke. Remewe thanne thyn almury in the bordure evene amiddes bothe prikkes, and this wol lede iustly the degree of thy sonne to sitte by-twixe bothe almikanteras in his right place. Ley thanne thy label over the degree of thy sonne; and find in the bordure the verrey tyde of the day or of the night. And as verreyly shaltow finde up-on thyn est orisonte thyn assendent. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

6. *To knowe the spring of the dawing and the ende of the evening, the which ben called the two crepusculis:*

[*Ad cognoscendum ortum solis et eius occasum, que vocatur vulgariter crepusculum.*]

Set the nadir of thy sonne up-on 18 degrees of heighte among thyn almikanteras on the west syde, and ley thy label on the degree of thy sonne, and thanne shal the poynt of thy label schewe the spring of day. Also set the nadir of thy sonne up-on 18 degrees of heighte a-mong thyn almikanteras on the est side, and ley over thy label up-on the degree of the sonne, and with the point of thy label find in the bordure the ende of the evening, that is, verrey night. The nadir of the sonne is thilke degree

that is opposit to the degree of the sonne, in the seventhe signe, as thus: every degree of Aries by ordre is nadir to every degree of Libra by ordre; and Taurus to Scorpion; Gemini to Sagittare; Cancer to Capricorne; Leo to Aquarie; Virgo to Pisces; and yif any degree in thy zodiak be dirk, his nadir shal declare him. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

7. *To knowe the arch of the day, that some folk callen the day artificial, from the sonne arysing til hit go to reste.*

[*Ad cognoscendum archum diei, quem vulgus vocat diem artificialem, in hoc, ab ortu solis usque ad occasum.*]

Set the degree of thy sonne up-on thyn est orisonte, and ley thy label on the degree of the sonne, and at the poynt of thy label in the bordure set a prikke. Turn thanne thy riet aboute til the degree of the sonne sit up-on the west orisonte, and ley thy label up-on the same degree of the sonne, and at the point of thy label set a-nother prikke. Rekne thanne the quantitee of tyme in the bordure by-twixe bothe prikkes, and tak ther thyn ark of the day. The remenant of the bordure under the orisonte is the ark of the night. Thus maistow rekne bothe arches, or every porcion, of whether that thee lyketh. And by this manere of wyrking maistow see how longe that any sterre fix dwelleth a-bove the erthe, fro tyme that he ryseth til he go to reste. But the day natural, that is to seyn 24 houres, is the revolucioun of the equinoxial with as moche partie of the zodiak as the sonne of his propre moevinge passeth in the mene whyle. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

8. *To turn the houres in-equales in houres equales.*

[*Ad convertendum horas inequales in horas equales.*]

Knowe the nombre of the degrees in the houres in-equales, and departe hem by 15, and tak ther thyn houres equales. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

9. *To knowe the quantitee of the day vulgare, that is to seyen, from spring of the day un-to verrey night.*

[*Ad cognoscendum quantitatem diei vulgaris, viz. ab ortu diei usque ad noctem.*]

Know the quantitee of thy crepusculis, as I have taught in the chapitre bi-forn, and adde hem to the arch of thy day artificial; and tak ther the space of alle the hole day vulgar, un-to verrey night. The same manere maystow worke, to knowe the quantitee of the vulgar night. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

10. *To knowe the quantite of houres in-equales by day.*

[*Ad cognoscendum horas inequales in die.*]

Understond wel, that thise houres in-equales ben cleped houres of planetes, and understond wel that som-tyme ben they lengere by day than by night, and som-tyme the contrarie. But understond wel, that evermo, generaly, the hour in-equal of the day with the houre in-equal of the night contenen 30 degrees of the bordure, whiche bordure is evermo answering to the degrees of the equinoxial; wher-for departe the arch of the day artificial in 12, and tak ther the quantitee of the houre in-equal by day. And yif thow abate the quantitee of the houre in-equal by daye out of 30, than shal the remenant that leveth performe the

houre inequal by night. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

11. *To knowe the quantite of houres equales.*

[*Ad cognoscendum quantitatem horarum inequalium.*]

The quantitee of houres equales, that is to seyn, the houres of the clokke, ben departed by 15 degrees al-redy in the bordure of thyn Astrolabie, as wel by night as by day, generaly for evere. What nedeth more declaracioun? Wher-for, whan thee list to know how manye houres of the clokke ben passed, or any part of any of thise houres that ben passed, or elles how many houres or partie of houres ben to come, fro swich a tyme to swich a tyme, by day or by nighte, knowe the degree of thy sonne, and ley thy label on it; turne thy riet aboute ioyntly with thy label, and with the point of it rekne in the bordure fro the sonne aryse un-to the same place ther thou desirest, by day as by nighte. This conclusioun wol I declare in the laste chapitre of the 4 partie of this tretis so openly, that ther shal lakke no worde that nedeth to the declaracioun. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

12. *Special declaracioun of the houres of planetes.*

[*Specialis declaracio de horis planetarum.*]

Understond wel, that evere-mo, fro the arysing of the sonne til it go to reste, the nadir of the sonne shal shewe the houre of the planete, and fro that tyme forward al the night til the sonne aryse; than shal the verrey degree of the sonne shewe the houre of the planete. Ensample as thus. The 13 day of March fil up-on a Saterday per aventure, and, at the arising of the sonne, I fond the secounde degree of Aries sitting up-on myn est orisonte, al-be-it that it was but lite; than fond I the 2 degree of Libra, nadir of my sonne, dessending on my west orisonte, up-on which west orisonte every day generally, at the sonne ariste, entreth the houre of any planete, after which planete the day bereth his name; and endeth in the nexte stryk of the plate under the forseide west orisonte; and evere, as the sonne climbeth uppere and uppere, so goth his nadir dounere and dounere, teching by swich strykes the houres of planetes by ordere as they sitten in the hevene. The first houre inequal of every Satterday is to Saturne; and the secounde, to Iupiter; the 3, to Mars; the 4, to the Sonne; the 5, to Venus; the 6, to Mercurius; the 7, to the Mone; and thanne agayn, the 8 is to Saturne; the 9, to Iupiter; the 10, to Mars; the 11, to the Sonne; the 12, to Venus; and now is my sonne gon to reste as for that Setterday. Thanne sheweth the verrey degree of the sonne the houre of Mercurie entring under my west orisonte at eve; and next him succedeth the Mone; and so forth by ordre, planete after planete, in houre after houre, al the night longe til the sonne aryse. Now ryseth the sonne that Sonday by the morwe; and the nadir of the sonne, up-on the west orizonte, sheweth me the entring of the houre of the forseide sonne. And in this maner succedeth planete under planete, fro Saturne un-to the Mone, and fro the Mone up a-gayn to Saturne, houre after houre generaly. And thus knowe I this conclusioun. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

13. *To knowe the altitude of the sonne in middes of the day, that is cleped the altitude meridian.*

[*Ad cognoscendum altitudinem solis in medio diei, que vocatur altitudo meridiana.*]

Set the degree of the sonne up-on

the lyne meridional, and rikene how many degrees of almikanteras ben by-twixe thyn est orisonte and the degree of the sonne. And tak ther thyn altitude meridian; this is to seyne, the heyest of the sonne as for that day. So maystow knowe in the same lyne, the heyest cours that any sterre fix climbeth by night; this is to seyn, that whan any sterre fix is passed the lyne meridional, than by-ginneth it to descende, and so doth the sonne. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

14. *To knowe the degree of the sonne by thy riet, for a maner curiositee, &c.*

[*Ad cognoscendum gradum solis curiose.*]

Sek bysily with thy rewle the heyest of the sonne in midde of the day; turne thanne thyn Astrolabie, and with a prikke of ink marke the nombre of that same altitude in the lyne meridional. Turne thanne thy riet a-boute til thou fynde a degree of thy zodiak acording with the prikke, this is to seyn, sittinge on the prikke; and in sooth, thou shalt finde but two degrees in al the zodiak of that condicioun; and yit thilke two degrees ben in diverse signes; than maistow lightly by the sesoun of the yere knowe the signe in whiche that is the sonne. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

15. *To know which day is lyk to which day as of lengthe, &c.*

[*Ad cognoscendum quales dies in longitudine sunt similes.*]

Loke whiche degrees ben y-lyke fer fro the hevedes of Cancer and Capricorn; and lok, whan the sonne is in any of thilke degrees, than ben the dayes y-lyke of lengthe. This is to seyn, that as long is that day in that monthe, as was swich a day in swich a month; ther varieth but lite. Also, yif thou take two dayes naturaly in the yer y-lyke fer fro eyther pointe of the equinoxial in the opposit parties, than as long is the day artificial of that on day as is the night of that othere, and the contrarie. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

16. *This chapitre is a maner declaracioun to conclusiouns that folwen.*

[*Illud capitulum est quedam declaracio ad certas conclusiones sequentes.*]

Understond wel that thy zodiak is departid in two halfe cercles, as fro the heved of Capricorne un-to the heved of Cancer; and agaynward fro the heved of Cancer un-to the heved of Capricorne. The heved of Capricorne is the lowest point, wher-as the sonne goth in winter; and the heved of Cancer is the heyest point, in whiche the sonne goth in somer. And ther-for understond wel, that any two degrees that ben y-lyke fer fro any of thise two hevedes, truste wel that thilke two degrees ben of y-lyke declinacioun, be it southward or northward; and the dayes of hem ben y-lyke of lengthe, and the nightes also; and the shadwes y-lyke, and the altitudes y-lyke at midday for evere. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

17. *To knowe the verrey degree of any maner sterre straunge or unstraunge after his longitude, though he be indeterminat in thyn Astrolabie; sothly to the trowthe, thus he shal be knowe.*

[*Ad cognoscendum verum gradum alicuius stelle aliene secundum eius longitudinem, quamvis sit indeterminata in astrolabio; veraciter isto modo.*]

Tak the altitude of this sterre whan he is on the est side of the lyne meridional, as ney as thou mayst gesse;

and tak an assendent a-non right by som maner sterre fix which that thou knowest; and for-get nat the altitude of the firste sterre, ne thyn assendent. And whan that this is don, espye diligently whan this same firste sterre passeth any-thing the south westward, and hath him a-non right in the same noumbre of altitude on the west side of this lyne meridional as he was caught on the est side; and tak a newe assendent a-non right by som maner sterre fixe which that thou knowest; and for-get nat this secounde assendent. And whan that this is don, rikne thanne how manye degrees ben by-twixe the firste assendent and the seconde assendent, and rikne wel the middel degree by-twene bothe assendentes, and set thilke middel degree up-on thin est orisonte; and waite thanne what degree that sit up-on the lyne meridional, and tak ther the verrey degree of the ecliptik in which the sterre stondeth for the tyme. For in the ecliptik is the longitude of a celestial body rekened, evene fro the heved of Aries un-to the ende of Pisces. And his latitude is rikned after the quantite of his declinacion, north or south to-warde the poles of this world; as thus. Yif it be of the sonne or of any fix sterre, rekene his latitude or his declinacioun fro the equinoxial cercle; and yif it be of a planete, rekne than the quantitee of his latitude fro the ecliptik lyne. Al-be-it so that fro the equinoxial may the declinacion or the latitude of any body celestial be rikned, after the site north or south, and after the quantitee of his declinacion. And right so may the latitude or the declinacion of any body celestial, save only of the sonne, after his site north or south, and after the quantitee of his declinacioun be rekned fro the ecliptik lyne; fro which lyne alle planetes som tyme declynen north or south, save only the forseide sonne. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

18. *To knowe the degrees of the longitudes of fixe sterres after that they ben determinat in thin Astrolabie, yif so be that they ben trewly set.*

[*Ad cognoscendum gradus longitudinis de stellis fixis que determinantur in astrolabio, sicut in suis locis recte locentur.*]

Set the centre of the sterre up-on the lyne meridional, and tak keep of thy zodiak, and loke what degree of any signe that sit on the same lyne meridional at that same tyme, and tak the degree in which the sterre standeth; and with that same degree comth that same sterre un-to that same lyne fro the orisonte. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

19. *To knowe with which degree of the zodiak any sterre fixe in thyn Astrolabie aryseth up-on the est orisonte, althogh his dwelling be in a-nother signe.*

[*Ad cognoscendum cum quibus gradibus zodiaci que stella fixa in astrolabio ascendit super orizontem orientalem, quamvis eius statio sit in alio signo.*]

Set the centre of the sterre up-on the est orisonte, and loke what degree of any signe that sit up-on the same orisonte at that same tyme. And understond wel, that with that same degree aryseth that same sterre; and this merveyllous arysing with a strange degree in another signe is by-cause that the latitude of the sterre fix is either north or south fro the equinoxial. But sothly, the latitudes of planetes ben comunly rekned fro the ecliptik, bi-cause that non of hem declineth but fewe degrees out fro the brede of the zodiak. And tak good keep of this chapitre of arysing of the celestial bodies; for truste wel, that neyther mone ne sterre as in oure embelif orisonte aryseth with that same degree of his longitude, save in o cas; and that is, whan they have no latitude fro the ecliptik lyne.

But natheles, som tyme is everiche of thise planetes under the same lyne. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

20. *To knowe the declinacioun of any degree in the zodiak fro the equinoxial cercle, &c.*

[*Ad cognoscendum declinacionem alicuius gradus in zodiaco a circulo equinoctiali.*]

Set the degree of any signe up-on the lyne meridional, and rikne his altitude in almikanteras fro the est orizonte up to the same degree set in the forseide lyne, and set ther a prikke. Turne up thanne thy riet, and set the heved of Aries or Libra in the same meridional lyne, and set ther a-nother prikke. And whan that this is don, considere the altitudes of hem bothe; for sothly the difference of thilke altitudes is the declinacion of thilke degree fro the equinoxial. And yif so be that thilke degree be northward fro the equinoxial, than is his declinacion north; yif it be southward, than is it south. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

21. *To knowe for what latitude in any regioun the almikanteras of any table ben compouned.*

[*Ad cognoscendum pro qua latitudine in aliqua regione almicantre tabule mee sunt composite.*]

Rikne how manye degrees of almikanteras, in the meridional lyne, be fro the cercle equinoxial un-to the senith; or elles fro the pool artik un-to the north orisonte; and for so gret a latitude or for so smal a latitude is the table compouned. And for more delaracion, lo here thy figure.

22. *To knowe in special the latitude of oure countray, I mene after the latitude of Oxenford, and the heighte of oure pol.*

[*Ad cognoscendum specialiter latitudinem nostri regionis, scilicet latitudinem Oxonie, et altitudinem poli nostri.*]

Understond wel, that as fer is the heved of Aries or Libra in the equinoxial from oure orisonte as is the senith from the pole artik; and as hey is the pol artik fro the orisonte, as the equinoxial is fer fro the senith. I prove it thus by the latitude of Oxenford. Understond wel, that the heyghte of oure pool artik fro oure north orisonte is 51 degrees and 50 minutes; than is the senith from oure pool artik 38 degrees and 10 minutes; than is the equinoxial from oure senith 51 degrees and 50 minutes; than is oure south orisonte from oure equinoxial 38 degrees and 10 minutes. Understond wel this rekning. Also for-get nat that the senith is 90 degrees of heyghte fro the orisonte, and oure equinoxial is 90 degrees from oure pool artik. Also this shorte rewle is soth, that the latitude of any place in a regioun is the distance fro the senith unto the equinoxial. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

23. *To prove evidently the latitude of any place in a regioun, by the preve of the heyghte of the pol artik in that same place.*

[*Ad probandum evidenter latitudinem alicuius loci in aliqua regione, per probacionem altitudinis de polo artico in eodem loco.*]

In some winters night, whan the firmament is clere and thikke-sterred, waite a tyme til that any sterre fix sit lyne-right perpendiculer over the pol artik, and clepe that sterre A. And wayte a-nother sterre that sit lyne-right under A, and under the pol, and clepe that sterre F. And understond wel, that F is nat considered but only to declare that A sit evene

overe the pool. Tak thanne a-non right the altitude of A from the orisonte, and forget it nat. Lat A and F go farwel til agayns the dawening a gret whyle; and come thanne agayn, and abyd til that A is evene under the pol and under F; for sothly, than wol F sitte over the pool, and A wol sitte under the pool. Tak than eft-sones the altitude of A from the orisonte, and note as wel his secounde altitude as his firste altitude; and whan that this is don, rikne how manye degrees that the firste altitude of A excedeth his seconde altitude, and tak half thilke porciouu that is exceded, and adde it to his seconde altitude; and tak ther the clevaciouu of thy pool, and eke the latitude of thy regioun. For thise two ben of a nombre; this is to seyn, as many degrees as thy pool is elevat, so michel is the latitude of the regioun. Ensample as thus: par aventure, the altitude of A in the evening is 56 degrees of heyghte. Than wol his seconde altitude or the dawing be 48; that is 8 lasse than 56, that was his firste altitude at even. Take thanne the half of 8, and adde it to 48, that was his seconde altitude, and than hastow 52. Now hastow the heyghte of thy pol, and the latitude of the regioun. But understond wel, that to prove this conclusioun and many a-nother fair conclusioun, thou most have a plomet hanging on a lyne heyer than thin heved on a perche; and thilke lyne mot hange evene perpendiculer bytwixe the pool and thyn eye; and thanne shaltow seen yif A sitte evene over the pool and over F at evene; and also yif F sitte evene over the pool and over A or day. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

24. *Another conclusioun to prove the heyghte of the pool artik fro the orisonte.*

[*Alia conclusio ad probandum altitudinem de polo artico ab orizonte.*]

Tak any sterre fixe that nevere dissendeth under the orisonte in thilke regioun, and considere his heyest altitude and his lowest altitude fro the orisonte; and make a nombre of bothe thise altitudes. Tak thanne and abate half that nombre, and tak ther the elevaciouu of the pol artik in that same regioun. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

25. *A-nother conclusioun to prove the latitude of the regioun, &c.*

[*Alia conclusio ad probandum latitudinem regionis.*]

Understond wel that the latitude of any place in a regioun is verreyly the space by-twixe the senith of hem that dwellen there and the equinoxial cerkle, north or southe, taking the mesure in the meridional lyne, as sheweth in the almikanteras of thyn Astrolabie. And thilke space is as moche as the pool artik is hey in the same place fro the orisonte. And than is the depressioun of the pol antartik, that is to seyn, than is the pol antartik by-nethe the orisonte, the same quantite of space, neither more ne lasse. Thanne, yif thow desire to knowe this latitude of the regioun, tak the altitude of the sonne in the middel of the day, whan the sonne is in the hevedes of Aries or of Libra; (for thanne moeveth the sonne in the lyne equinoxial); and abate the nombre of that same sonnes altitude out of 90, and thanne is the remenaunt of the noumbre that leveth the latitude of the regioun. As thus: I suppose that the sonne is thilke day at noon 38 degrees and 10 minutes of heyghte. Abate thanne thise degrees and minutes out of 90; so leveth there 51 degrees and 50 minutes, the latitude. I sey nat this but for ensample; for wel I wot the latitude of Oxenforde is certein minutes lasse, as I mighte prove. Now yif so be that thee semeth to long a taryinge, to abyde til that the sonne be in the hevedes of Aries or of Libra, thanne

waite whan the sonne is in any other degree of the zodiak, and considere the degree of his declinacion fro the equinoxial lyne; and yif it so be that the sonnes declinacion be northward fro the equinoxial, abate thanne fro the sonnes altitude at noon the nombre of his declinacion, and thanne hastow the heyghte of the hevedes of Aries and Libra. As thus: my sonne is, par aventure, in the firste degre of Leoun, 58 degrees and 10 minutes of heyghte at noon and his declinacion is almost 20 degrees northward fro the equinoxial; abate thanne thilke 20 degrees of declinacion out of the altitude at noon, than leveth thee 38 degrees and odde minutes; lo ther the heved of Aries or Libra, and thyn equinoxial in that regioun. Also yif so be that the sonnes declinacioun be southward fro the equinoxial, adde thanne thilke declinacion to the altitude of the sonne at noon; and tak ther the hevedes of Aries and Libra, and thyn equinoxial. Abate thanne the heyghte of the equinoxial out of 90 degrees, and thanne leveth there the distans of the pole, 51 degrees and 50 minutes, of that regioun fro the equinoxial. Or elles, yif thee lest, take the heyest altitude fro the equinoxial of any sterre fix that thou knowest, and tak his nethere elongacioun lengthing fro the same equinoxial lyne, and wirke in the maner forseid. And for more declaracion, lo here thy figure.

26. *Declaracioun of the assensioun of signes, &c.*

[*Declaracio de ascensione signorum.*]

The excellence of the spere solide, amonges other noble conclusiouns, sheweth manifeste the diverse assencioun of signes in diverse places, as wel in the righte cercle as in the embelif cercle. Thise auctours wryten that thilke signe is cleped of right ascensioun, with which more part of the cercle equinoxial and lasse part of the zodiak ascendeth; and thilke signe assendeth embelif, with whiche lasse part of the equinoxial and more part of the zodiak assendeth. Ferther-over they seyn, that in thilke cuntrey where as the senith of hem that dwellen there is in the equinoxial lyne, and her orisonte passing by the poles of this worlde, thilke folke han this right cercle and the right orisonte; and evere-mo the arch of the day and the arch of the night is ther y-like long, and the sonne twyes every yeer passinge thorow the senith of her heved; and two someres and two winteres in a yeer han this forseide poeple. And the almikanteras in her Astrolabies ben streighte as a lyne, so as sheweth in this figure. The utilite to knowe the assencioun in the righte cercle is this: truste wel that by mediacioun of thilke assenciouns thise astrologiens, by hir tables and hir instrumentz, knowen verreyly the assencioun of every degree and minut in al the zodiak, as shal be shewed. And *nota*, that this forseid righte orisonte, that is cleped *orison rectum*, divydeth the equinoxial in-to right angles; and the embelif orisonte, wher-as the pol is enhaused up-on the orisonte, overkerveth the equinoxial in embelif angles, as sheweth in the figure. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

27. *This is the conclusion to knowe the assenciouns of signes in the right cercle, that is, circulus directus, &c.*

[*Ad cognoscendum ascenciones signorum in recto circulo, qui vocatur circulus directus.*]

Set the heved of what signe thee liste to knowe his assending in the right cercle up-on the lyne meridional; and waite wher thyn almury toucheth the bordure, and set ther a prikke. Turne thanne thy riet westward til that the ende of the forseide signe sitte up-on the meridional lyne; and eft-sones waite wher thyn almury toucheth the bordure, and set ther

another prikke. Rikne thanne the nombre of degrees in the bordure by-twixe bothe prikkes, and tak the assencioun of the signe in the right cercle. And thus maystow wyrke with every porcioun of thy zodiak, &c. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

28. *To knowe the assencions of signes in the embelif cercle in every regioun, I mene, in circulo obliquo.*

[*Ad cognoscendum ascenciones signorum in circulo obliquo, in omni regione.*]

Set the heved of the signe which as thee list to knowe his ascensioun up-on the est orisonte, and waite wher thyn almury toucheth the bordure, and set ther a prikke. Turne thanne thy riet upward til that the ende of the same signe sitte up-on the est orisonte, and waite eft-sones wher as thyn almury toucheth the bordure, and set ther a-nother prikke. Rikne thanne the noumbre of degrees in the bordure by-twixe bothe prikkes, and tak ther the assencioun of the signe in the embelif cercle. And understond wel, that alle signes in thy zodiak, fro the heved of Aries unto the ende of Virgo, ben cleped signes of the north fro the equinoxial; and these signes arysen by-twixe the verrey est and the verrey north in oure orisonte generaly for evere. And alle signes fro the heved of Libra un-to the ende of Pisces ben cleped signes of the south fro the equinoxial; and thise signes arysen ever-mo by-twixe the verrey est and the verrey south in oure orisonte. Also every signe by-twixe the heved of Capricorne un-to the ende of Geminis aryseth on oure orisonte in lasse than two houres equales; and thise same signes, fro the heved of Capricorne un-to the ende of Geminis, ben cleped 'tortuos signes' or 'croked signes,' for they arisen embelif on oure orisonte; and thise crokede signes ben obedient to the signes that ben of right assencioun. The signes of right assencioun ben fro the heved of Cancer to the ende of Sagittare; and thise signes arysen more upright, and they ben called eke sovereyn signes; and everich of hem aryseth in more space than in two houres. Of which signes, Gemini obeyeth to Cancer; and Taurus to Leo; Aries to Virgo; Pisces to Libra; Aquarius to Scorpioun; and Capricorne to Sagittare. And thus ever-mo two signes, that ben y-lyke fer fro the heved of Capricorne, obeyen everich of hem til other. And for more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

29. *To knowe iustly the foure quarters of the world, as est, west, north, and sowth.*

[*Ad cognoscendum evidenter quatuor partes mundi, scilicet, orientem, austrum, aquilonem, et occidentem.*]

Take the altitude of thy sonne whan thee list, and note wel the quarter of the world in which the sonne is for the tyme by the azimutz. Turne thanne thyn Astrolabie, and set the degree of the sonne in the almikanteras of his altitude, on thilke side that the sonne stant, as is the manere in taking of houres; and ley thy label on the degree of the sonne, and rikene how many degrees of the bordure ben by-twixe the lyne meridional and the point of thy label; and note wel that noumbre. Turne thanne a-gayn thyn Astrolabie, and set the point of thy gret rewle, ther thou takest thyne altitudes, up-on as many degrees in his bordure fro his meridional as was the point of thy label fro the lyne meridional on the wombe-syde. Tak thanne thyn Astrolabie with bothe handes sadly and slely, and lat the sonne shyne thorow bothe holes of thy rewle; and sleyly, in thilke shyninge, lat thyn Astrolabie couch adoun evene up-on a smothe grond, and thanne wol the verrey lyne meridional of thyn Astrolabie

lye evene south, and the est lyne wole lye est, and the west lyne west, and north lyne north, so that thou werke softly and avisely in the couching; and thus hastow the 4 quarters of the firmament. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

30. *To knowe the altitude of planetes fro the wey of the sonne, whether so they be north or south fro the forseide wey.*

[*Ad cognoscendum altitudinem planetarum a cursu solis, utrum sint in parte australi vel boreali a cursu supra dicto.*]

Lok whan that a planete is in the lyne meridional, yif that hir altitude be of the same heyghte that is the degree of the sonne for that day, and than is the planete in the verrey wey of the sonne, and hath no latitude. And yif the altitude of the planete be heyere than the degree of the sonne, than is the planete north fro the wey of the sonne swich a quantite of latitude as sheweth by thyn almikanteras. And yif the altitude of the planete be lasse than the degree of the sonne, thanne is the planete south fro the wey of the sonne swich a quantite of latitude as sheweth by thyn almikanteras. This is to seyn, fro the wey wher-as the sonne wente thilke day, but nat from the wey of the sonne in every place of the zodiak. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

31. *To knowe the senith of the arysing of the sonne, this is to seyn, the partie of the orisonte in which that the sonne aryseth.*

[*Ad cognoscendum signum de ortu solis, scilicet, illam partem orientis in qua oritur sol.*]

Thou most first considere that the sonne aryseth nat al-wey verrey est, but some tyme by north the est, and some tyme by southe the est. Sothly, the sonne aryseth never-mo verrey est in oure orisonte, but he be in the heved of Aries or Libra. Now is thyn orisonte departed in 24 parties by thy azimutz, in significacion of 24 partiez of the world; al-be-it so that shipmen rikne thilke partiez in 32. Thanne is ther no more but waite in which azimut that thy sonne entreth at his arysing; and take ther the senith of the arysing of the sonne. The manere of the devisioun of thyn Astrolabie is this; I mene as in this cas. First is it devided in 4 plages principalx with the lyne that goth from est to west, and than with a-nother lyne that goth fro south to north. Than is it devided in smale partiez of azimutz, as est, and est by southe, whereas is the firste azimut above the est lyne; and so forth, fro partie to partie, til that thou come agayn un-to the est lyne. Thus maistow understond also the senith of any sterre, in which partie he ryseth, &c. And for the more declaracion, lo here the figure.

32. *To knowe in which partie of the firmament is the coniunccioun.*

[*Ad cognoscendum in qua parte firmamenti sunt coniuncciones solis et lune.*]

Considere the tyme of the coniunccion by thy kalender, as thus; lok how many houres thilke coniunccion is fro the midday of the day precedent, as sheweth by the canoun of thy kalender. Rikne thanne thilke nombre of houres in the bordure of thyn Astrolabie, as thou art wont to do in knowing of the houres of the day or of the night; and ley thy label over the degree of the sonne; and thanne wol the point of thy label sitte up-on the hour of the coniunccion. Loke thanne in which azimut the degree of thy sonne sitteth, and in that partie of the firmament is the coniunccioun. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

33. *To knowe the senith of the altitude of the sonne, &c.*

[*Ad cognoscendum signa de altitudine solis.*]

This is no more to seyn but any tyme of the day tak the altitude of the sonne; and by the azimut in which he stondeth, maystou seen in which partie of the firmament he is. And in the same wyse maystou seen, by the night, of any sterre, whether the sterre sitte est or west or north, or any partie by-twene, after the name of the azimut in which is the sterre. And for the more declaracioun, lo here the figure.

34. *To knowe sothly the degree of the longitude of the mone, or of any planete that hath no latitude for the tyme fro the ecliptik lyne.*

[*Ad cognoscendum veraciter gradum de longitudine lune, vel alicuius planete qui non habet longitudinem pro tempore causante linea ecliptica.*]

Tak the altitude of the mone, and rikne thyn altitude up among thyne almikanteras on which syde that the mone stande; and set there a prikke. Tak thenne anon-right, up-on the mones syde, the altitude of any sterre fix which that thou knowest, and set his centre up-on his altitude among thyn almikanteras ther the sterre is founde. Waite thanne which degree of the zodiak toucheth the prikke of the altitude of the mone, and tak ther the degree in which the mone standeth. This conclusioun is verrey soth, yif the sterres in thyn. Astrolabie stonden after the trowthe; of comune, tretis of Astrolabie ne make non excepcioun whether the mone have latitude, or non; ne on whether syde of the mone the altitude of the sterre fix be taken. And *nota*, that yif the mone shewe himself by light of day, than maystow wyrke this same conclusioun by the sonne, as wel as by the fix sterre. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

35. *This is the workinge of the conclusioun, to knowe yif that any planete be directe or retrograde.*

[*Hec conclusio operatur ad cognoscendum si aliqua planeta sit directa vel retrograda.*]

Tak the altitude of any sterre that is cleped a planete, and note it wel. And tak eek anon the altitude of any sterre fix that thou knowest, and note it wel also. Come thanne agayn the thridde or the ferthe night next folwing; for thanne shaltow aperceyve wel the moeving of a planete, whether so he moeve forthward or bakward. Awaite wel thanne whan that thy sterre fix is in the same altitude that she was whan thou toke hir firste altitude; and tak than eftsones the altitude of the forseide planete, and note it wel. For trust wel, yif so be that the planete be on the right syde of the meridional lyne, so that his seconde altitude be lasse than his firste altitude was, thanne is the planete directe. And yif he be on the west syde in that condicion, thanne is he retrograd. And yif so be that this planete be up-on the est syde whan his altitude is taken, so that his secounde altitude be more than his firste altitude, thanne is he retrograde, and yif he be on the west syde, than is he directe. But the contrarie of thise parties is of the cours of the mone; for sothly, the mone moeveth the contrarie from othere planetes as in hir episicle, but in non other manere. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

36. *The conclusiouns of equaciouns of houses, after the Astrolabie, &c.*

[*Conclusio de equacione domorum.*]

Set the by-ginning of the degree that assendeth up-on the ende of the 8 houre inequal; thanne wol the by-ginning of the 2 hous sitte up-on the

lyne of midnight. Remeve thanne the degree that assendeth, and set him on the ende of the 10 hour inequal; and thanne wol the byginning of the 3 hous sitte up-on the midnight lyne. Bring up agayn the same degree that assendeth first, and set him up-on the orisonte; and thanne wol the be-ginning of the 4 hous sitte up-on the lyne of midnight. Tak thanne the nadir of the degree that first assendeth, and set him on the ende of the 2 houre inequal; and thanne wol the by-ginning of the 5 hous sitte up-on the lyne of midnight; set thanne the nadir of the assendent on the ende of the 4 houre, than wol the byginning of the 6 house sitte on the midnight lyne. The byginning of the 7 hous is nadir of the assendent, and the byginning of the 8 hous is nadir of the 2; and the byginning of the 9 hous is nadir of the 3; and the by-ginning of the 10 hous is the nadir of the 4; and the byginning of the 11 hous is nadir of the 5; and the byginning of the 12 hous is nadir of the 6. And for the more declaracion, lo here the figure.

37. *A-nother manere of equaciouns of houses by the Astrolabie.*

[*De aliqua forma equacionis domorum secundum astrolabium.*]

Tak thyn assendent, and thanne hastow thy 4 angles; for wel thou wost that the opposit of thyn assendent, that is to seyn, thy by-ginning of the 7 hous, sit up-on the west orizonte; and the byginning of the 10 hous sit up-on the lyne meridional; and his opposit up-on the lyne of midnight. Thanne ley thy label over the degree that assendeth, and rekne fro the point of thy label alle the degrees in the bordure, til thou come to the meridional lyne; and departe alle thilke degrees in 3 evene parties, and take the evene equacion of 3; for ley thy label over everich of 3 parties, and than maistow see by thy label in which degree of the zodiak is the by-ginning of everich of thise same houses fro the assendent: that is to seyn, the beginning of the 12 house next above thyn assendent; and thanne the beginning of the 11 house; and thanne the 10, up-on the meridional lyne; as I first seide. The same wyse wirke thou fro the assendent doun to the lyne of midnight; and thanne thus hastow other 3 houses, that is to seyn, the byginning of the 2, and the 3, and the 4 houses; thanne is the nadir of thise 3 houses the by-ginning of the 3 houses that folwen. And for the more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

38. *To finde the lyne merydional to dwelle fix in any certein place.*

[*Ad inveniendum lineam meridionalem per subtiles operaciones.*]

Tak a rond plate of metal; for warping, the brodere the bettre; and make ther-upon a iust compas, a lite with-in the bordure; and ley this ronde plate up-on an evene grond, or on an evene ston, or on an evene stok fix in the gronde; and ley it even by a level. And in centre of the compas stike an evene pin or a wyr upright; the smallere the betere. Set thy pin by a plom-rewle evene upright; and let this pin be no lengere than a quarter of the diametre of thy compas, fro the centre. And waite bisily, aboute 10 or 11 of the clokke and whan the sonne shyneth, whan the shadwe of the pin entreth anything with-in the cercle of thy plate an heer-mele, and mark ther a prikke with inke. Abyde thanne stille waiting on the sonne after 1 of the clokke, til that the schadwe of the wyr or of the pin passe ony-thing out of the cercle of the compas, be it never so lyte; and set ther a-nother prikke of inke. Take than a compas, and mesure evene the middel by-twixe bothe prikkes; and set ther a prikke. Take thanne a rewle, and draw a stryke, evene a-lyne fro the pin un-to the middel prikke; and tak ther thy

lyne meridional for evere-mo, as in that same place. And yif thow drawe a cros-lyne over-thwart the compas, iustly over the lyne meridional, than hastow est and west and south; and, par consequence, than the nadir of the south lyne is the north lyne. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

39. *Descripcion of the meridional lyne, of longitudes, and latitudes of citees and townes from on to a-nother of clymatz.*

This lyne meridional is but a maner descripcion of lyne imagined, that passeth upon the poles of this world and by the senith of oure heved. And hit is y-cleped the lyne meridional; for in what place that any maner man is at any tyme of the yeer, whan that the sonne by moeving of the firmament cometh to his verrey meridian place, than is hit verrey midday, that we clepen oure noon, as to thilke man; and therfore is it cleped the lyne of midday. And *nota*, for evermo, of 2 citees or of 2 tounes, of whiche that o toun aprocheth more toward the est than doth that other toun, truste wel that thilke tounes han diverse meridians. *Nota* also, that the arch of the equinoxial, that is conteyned or bounded by-twixe the 2 meridians, is cleped the longitude of the toun. And yif so be that two tounes have y-lyke meridian, or oon meridian, than is the distance of hem bothe y-lyke fer fro the est; and the contrarie. And in this manere they chaunge nat her meridian, but sothly they chaungen her almikanteras; for the enhausing of the pool and the distance of the sonne. The longitude of a clymat is a lyne imagined fro est to west, y-lyke distant by-twene them alle. The latitude of a clymat is a lyne imagined from north to south the space of the erthe, fro the byginning of the firste clymat unto the verrey ende of the same climat, evene directe agayns the pole artik. Thus seyn some auctours; and somme of hem seyn that yif men clepen the latitude, thay mene the arch meridian that is contiened or intercept by-twixe the senith and the equinoxial. Thanne sey they that the distaunce fro the equinoxial unto the ende of a clymat, evene agayns the pole artyk, is the latitude of a clymat for sothe. And for more declaracioun, lo here thy figure.

40. *To knowe with which degree of the zodiak that any planete assendith on the orisonte, whether so that his latitude be north or south.*

Knowe by thyn almenak the degree of the ecliptik of any signe in which that the planete is rekned for to be, and that is cleped the degree of his longitude; and knowe also the degree of his latitude fro the ecliptik, north or south. And by thise samples folwinge in special, maystow wirke for sothe in every signe of the zodiak. The degree of the longitude, par aventure, of Venus or of another planete, was 6 of Capricorne, and the latitude of him was northward 2 degrees fro the ecliptik lyne. I tok a subtil compas, and cleped that oon poynt of my compas A, and that other poynt F. Than tok I the point of A, and set it in the ecliptik lyne evene in my zodiak, in the degree of the longitude of Venus, that is to seyn, in the 6 degree of Capricorne; and thanne sette I the point of F upward in the same signe, bycause that the latitude was north, up-on the latitude of Venus, that is to seyn, in the 6 degree fro the heved of Capricorne; and thus have I 2 degrees by-twixe my two prikkes. Than leide I doun softely my compas, and sette the degree of the longitude up-on the orisonte; tho tok I and wexede my label in maner of a peyre tables to resceyve distinctly the prikkes of my compas. Tho tok I this forseide label, and leide it fix over the degree of my longitude; tho tok I up my compas, and sette the point of A in the wex on my label, as

evene as I coude gesse over the ecliptik lyne, in the ende of the longitude; and sette the point of F endlang in my label up-on the space of the latitude, inwarde and over the zodiak, that is to seyn, north-ward fro the ecliptik. Than leide I doun my compas, and lokede wel in the wey upon the prikke of A and of F; tho turned I my riet til that the prikke of F sat up-on the orisonte; than saw I wel that the body of Venus, in hir latitude of 2 degrees septentrionalis, assended, in the ende of the 6 degree, in the heved of Capricorne. And *nota*, that in the same maner maistow wirke with any latitude septentrional in alle signes; but sothly the latitude meridional of a planete in Capricorne may not be take, by-cause of the litel space by-twixe the ecliptik and the bordure of the Astrolabie; but sothly, in alle other signes it may.

Also the degree, par aventure, of Iuppiter or of a-nother planete, was in the first degree of Pisces in longitude, and his latitude was 3 degrees meridional; tho tok I the point of A, and sette it in the firste degree of Pisces on the ecliptik, and thanne sette I the point of F dounward in the same signe, by-cause that the latitude was south 3 degrees, that is to seyn, fro the heved of Pisces; and thus have I 3 degrees by-twixe bothe prikkes; thanne sette I the degree of the longitude up-on the orisonte. Tho tok I my label, and leide it fix upon the degree of the longitude; tho sette I the point of A on my label, evene over the ecliptik lyne, in the ende evene of the degree of the longitude, and sette the point of F endlang in my label the space of 3 degrees of the latitude fro the zodiak, this is to seyn, southward fro the ecliptik, toward the bordure; and turned my riet til the prikke of F sat up-on the orisonte; thanne saw I wel that the body of Iuppiter, in his latitude of 3 degrees meridional, ascended with 14 degrees of Pisces *in horoscopo*. And in this maner maistow wirke with any latitude meridional, as I first seide, save in Capricorne. And yif thou wolt pleye this craft with the arysing of the mone, loke thou rekne wel hir cours houre by houre; for she ne dwelleth nat in a degree of hir longitude but a litel whyle, as thou wel knowest; but natheles, yif thou rekne hir verreye moeving by thy tables houre after houre, [thou shalt do wel y-now].

Explicit tractatus de Conclusionibus Astrolabii, compilatus per Galfridum Chauciers ad Filium suum Lodewicum, scolarem tunc temporis Oxonie, ac sub tutela illius nobilissimi philosophi Magistri N. Strode etc.

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SUPPLEMENTARY PROPOSITIONS.

41. *Umbra Recta.*

Vif it so be that thou wilt werke by *umbra recta*, and thou may come to the bas of the toure, in this maner thou schalt werke. Tak the altitude of the tour by bothe holes, so that thy rewle ligge even in a poynt. Ensample as thus: I see him thorw at the poynt of 4; than mete I the space be-tween me and the tour, and I finde it 20 feet; than be-holde I how 4 is to 12, right so is the space betwixe thee and the tour to the altitude of the tour. For 4 is the thridde part of 12, so is the space be-tween thee and the tour the thridde part of the altitude of the tour; than thryes 20 feet is the heyghte of the tour, with adding of thyn owne persone to thyn eye. And this rewle is so general in *umbra recta*, fro the poynt of oon to 12. And yif thy rewle falle upon 5, than is 5 12-partyes of the heyght the space be-tween thee and the toure; with adding of thyn owne heyght.

42. *Umbra Versa.*

Another maner of werkinge, by *umbra versa*. Yif so be that thou may nat come to the bas of the tour, I see him thorw the nombre of 1; I sette ther a prikke at my fote; than go I neer to the tour, and I see him thorw at the poynt of 2, and there I sette a-nother prikke; and I beholde how 1 hath him to 12, and ther finde I that it hath him twelfe sythes; than beholde I how 2 hath him to 12, and thou shalt finde it sexe sythes; than thou shalt finde that as 12 above 6 is the numbre of 6, right so is the space between thy two prikkes the space of 6 tymes thyn altitude. And note, that at the ferste altitude of 1, thou settest a prikke; and afterward, whan thou seest him at 2, ther thou settest an-other prikke; than thou findest between two prikkys 60 feet; than thou shalt finde that 10 is the 6-party of 60. And then is 10 feet the altitude of the tour. For other poyntis, yif it fille in *umbra versa*, as thus: I sette caas it fill upon 2, and at the secunde upon 3; than schalt thou finde that 2 is 6 partyes of 12; and 3 is 4 partyes of 12; than passeth 6 4, by nombre of 2; so is the space between two prikkes twyes the heyghte of the tour. And yif the differens were thryes, than shulde it be three tymes; and thus mayst thou werke fro 2 to 12; and yif it be 4, 4 tymes; or 5, 5 tymes; *et sic de ceteris.*

43. *Umbra Recta.*

An-other maner of wyrking be *umbra recta.* Yif it so be that thou mayst nat come to the baas of the tour, in this maner thou schalt werke. Sette thy rewle upon 1 till thou see the altitude, and sette at thy foot a prikke. Than sette thy rewle upon 2, and beholde what is the differense be-tween 1 and 2, and thou shalt finde that it is 1. Than mete the space be-tween two prikkes, and that is the 12 partie of the altitude of the tour. And yif ther were 2, it were the 6 partye; and yif ther were 3, the 4 partye; *et sic deinceps.* And note, yif it were 5, it were the 5 party of 12; and 7, 7 party of 12; and note, at the altitude of thy conclusioun, adde the stature of thyn heyghte to thyn eye.

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44. *Another maner conclusion, to knowe the mene mote and the argumentis of any planete. To knowe the mene mote and the argumentis of every planete fro yere to yere, from day to day, from houre to houre, and from smale fraccionis infinite.*

[*Ad cognoscendum medios motus et argumenta de hora in horam cuiuslibet planete, de anno in annum, de die in diem.*]

In this maner shalt thou worche: consider thy rote first, the whiche is made the beginning of the tables fro the yere of oure lord 1397, and entere hit in-to thy slate for the laste meridie of December; and than consider the yere of oure lord, what is the date, and be-hold whether thy date be more or lasse than the yere 1397. And yf hit so be that hit be more, loke how many yeres hit passeth, and with so many entere into thy tables in the first lyne ther-as is writen *anni collecti et expansi.* And loke where the same planet is writen in the bede of thy table, and than loke what thou findest in directe of the same yere of oure lord whiche is passid, be hit 8, or 9, or 10, or what nombre that evere it be, til the tyme that thou come to 20, or 40, or 60. And that thou findest in directe wryte in thy slate under thy rote, and adde hit to-geder, and that is thy mene mote, for the laste meridian of the December, for the same yere whiche that thou hast purposed. And if hit so be that hit passe 20,

consider wel that fro 1 to 20 ben *anni expansi*, and fro 20 to 3000 ben *anni collecti*; and if thy nombere passe 20, than take that thou findest in directe of 20, and if hit be more, as 6 or 18, than take that thou findest in directe there-of, that is to sayen, signes, degrees, minutes, and secoundes, and adde to-gedere un-to thy rote; and thus to make rotes; and note, that if hit so be that the yere of oure lord be lasse than the rote, whiche is the yere of oure lord 1397, than shalt thou wryte in the same wyse furst thy rote in thy slate, and after entere in-to thy table in the same yere that be lasse, as I taught be-fore; and than consider how many signes, degrees, minutes, and secoundes thyn entringe conteyneth. And so be that ther be 2 entrees, than adde hem togeder, and after with-drawe hem from the rote, the yere of oure lord 1397; and the residue that leveth is thy mene mote fro the laste meridie of December, the whiche thou hast purposed; and if hit so be that thou wolt weten thy mene mote for any day, or for any fraccioun of day, in this maner thou shalt worche. Make thy rote fro the laste day of Decembere in the maner as I have taught, and afterward behold how many monethis, dayes, and houres ben passid from the meridie of Decembere, and with that entere with the laste moneth that is ful passed, and take that thou findest in directe of him, and wryte hit in thy slate; and entere with as mony dayes as be more, and wryte that thou findest in directe of the same planete that thou worchest for; and in the same wyse in the table of houres, for houres that ben passed, and adde alle these to thy rote; and the residue is the mene mote for the same day and the same houre.

45. *Another manere to knowe the mene mote.*

Whan thou wolt make the mene mote of eny planete to be by Arschieles tables, take thy rote, the whiche is for the yere of oure lord 1397; and if so be that thy yere be passid the date, wryte that date, and than wryte the nombere of the yeres. Than withdrawe the yeres out of the yeres that ben passed that rote. Ensampul as thus: the yere of oure lord 1400, I wolde witen, precise, my rote; than wroot I furst 1400. And under that nombere I wrote a 1397; than withdrow I the laste nombere out of that, and than fond I the residue was 3 yere; I wiste that 3 yere was passed fro the rote, the whiche was writen in my tables. Than after-ward soghte I in my tables the *annis collectis et expansis*, and amonge myn expanse yeres fond I 3 yeer. Than tok I alle the signes, degrees, and minutes, that I fond directe under the same planete that I wroghte for, and wroot so many signes, degrees, and minutes in my slate, and afterward added I to signes, degrees, minutes, and secoundes, the whiche I fond in my rote the yere of oure lord 1397; and kepte the residue; and than had I the mene mote for the laste day of Decembere. And if thou woldest wete the mene mote of any planete in March, Aprile, or May, other in any other tyme or moneth of the yere, loke how many monethes and dayes ben passed from the laste day of Decembere, the yere of oure lord 1400; and so with monethes and dayes entere in-to thy table ther thou findest thy mene mote y-writen in monethes and dayes, and take alle the signes, degrees, minutes, and secoundes that thou findest y-write in directe of thy monethes, and adde to signes, degrees, minutes, and secoundes that thou findest with thy rote the yere of oure lord 1400, and the residue that leveth is the mene mote for that same day. And note, if hit so be that thou woldest wete the mene mote in ony yere that is lasse than thy rote, withdrawe the nombere of so many yeres as hit is lasse than the yere of oure lord a 1397, and kepe the residue; and so many yeres, monethes, and

dayes entere in-to thy tabelis of thy mene mote. And take alle the signes, degrees, and minutes, and secoundes, that thou findest in directe of alle the yeris, monethes, and dayes, and wryte hem in thy slate; and above thilke nombere wryte the signes, degrees, minutes, and secoundes, the whiche thou findest with thy rote the yere of oure lord a 1397; and with-drawe alle the nethere signes and degrees fro the signes and degrees, minutes, and secoundes of other signes with thy rote; and thy residue that leveth is thy mene mote for that day.

46. *For to knowe at what houre of the day, or of the night, shal be flode or ebbe.*

First wite thou certeinly, how that haven stondeth, that thou list to werke for; that is to say in whiche place of the firmament the mone being, maketh fulle see. Than awayte thou redily in what degree of the zodiak that the mone at that tyme is inne. Bringe furth than the labelle, and set the point therof in that same cost that the mone maketh flode, and set thou there the degree of the mone according with the egge of the label. Than afterward awayte where is than the degree of the sonne, at that tyme. Remeve thou than the label fro the mone, and bringe and sette it iustly upon the degree of the sonne. And the point of the label shal than declare to thee, at what houre of the day or of the night shal be flode. And there also maist thou wite by the same point of the label, whether it be, at that same tyme, flode or ebbe, or half flode, or quarter flode, or ebbe, or half or quarter ebbe; or ellis at what houre it was last, or shal be next by night or by day, thou than shalt esely knowe, &c. Furthermore, if it so be that thou happe to worke for this matere aboute the tyme of the coniunccioun, bringe furthe the degree of the mone with the labelle to that coste as it is before seyd. But than thou shalt understonde that thou may not bringe furthe the label fro the degree of the mone as thou dide before; for-why the sonne is than in the same degree with the mone. And so thou may at that tyme by the point of the labelle unremeved knowe the houre of the flode or of the ebbe, as it is before seyd, &c. And evermore as thou findest the mone passe fro the sonne, so remeve thou the labelle than fro the degree of the mone, and bringe it to the degree of the sonne. And worke thou than as thou dide before, &c. Or elles knowe thou what houre it is that thou art inne, by thyn instrument. Than bringe thou furth fro thennes the labelle and ley it upon the degree of the mone, and therby may thou wite also whan it was flode, or whan it wol be next, be it night or day; &c.

[*The following sections are spurious; they are numbered so as to shew what propositions they repeat.*]

41 *a. Umbra Recta.*

Yif thy rewle falle upon the 8 poynt on right schadwe, than make thy figure of 8; than loke how moche space of feet is be-tween thee and the tour, and multiplye that be 12, and whan thou hast multiplied it, than divyde it be the same nombre of 8, and kepe the residue; and adde therto up to thyn eye to the residue, and that shal be the verry heyght of the tour. And thus mayst thou werke on the same wyse, fro 1 to 12.

41 *b. Umbra Recta.*

An-other maner of werking upon the same syde. Loke upon which poynt thy rewle falleth whan thou seest the top of the tour thorow two litil holes; and mete than the space fro thy foot to the baas of the tour; and right as the nombre of thy poynt hath him-self to 12, right so the mesure be-tween thee and the tour

hath him-self to the heighte of the same tour. Ensample: I sette caas thy rewle falle upon 8; than is 8 two-thrid partyes of 12; so the space is the two-thrid partyes of the tour.

42 *a. Umbra Versa.*

To knowe the heyghth by thy poyntes of *umbra versa*. Yif thy rewle falle upon 3, whan thou seest the top of the tour, set a prikke there-as thy foot stont; and go ner til thou mayst see the same top at the poynt of 4, and sette ther another lyk prikke. Than mete how many foot ben be-tween the two prikkes, and adde the lengthe up to thyn eye therto; and that shal be the heyght of the tour. And note, that 3 is [the] fourthe party of 12, and 4 is the thridde party of 12. Now passeth 4 the nombre of 3 be the distaunce of 1; therfore the same space, with thyn heyght to thyn eye, is the heyght of the tour. And yif it so be that ther be 2 or 3 distaunce in the nombres, so shulde the mesures be-tween the prikkes be twyes or thryes the heyghte of the tour.

43 *a. Ad cognoscendum altitudinem alicuius rei per umbram rectam.*

To knowe the heyghte of thinges, yif thou mayst nat come to the bas of a thing. Sette thy rewle upon what thou wilt, so that thou may see the top of the thing thorw the two holes, and make a marke ther thy foot standeth; and go neer or forther, til thou mayst see thorw another poynt, and marke ther a-nother marke. And loke than what is the differense be-twen the two poyntes in the scale; and right as that difference hath him to 12, right so the space be-tween thee and the two markes hath him to the heyghte of the thing. Ensample: I set caas thou seest it thorw a poynt of 4; after, at the poynt of 3. Now passeth the nombre of 4 the nombre of 3 be the difference of 1; and right as this difference 1 hath him-self to 12, right so the mesure be-tween the two markes hath him to the heyghte of the thing, putting to the heyghte of thy-self to thyn eye; and thus mayst thou werke fro 1 to 12.

42 *b. Per umbram versam.*

Furthermore, yif thou wilt knowe in *umbra versa*, by the craft of *umbra recta*, I suppose thou take the altitude at the poynt of 4, and makest a marke; and thou goost neer til thou hast it at the poynt of 3, and than makest thou ther a-nother mark. Than muste thou devyde 144 by eche of the poyntes be-fornseyd, as thus: yif thou devyde 144 be 4, and the nombre that cometh ther-of schal be 36, and yif thou devyde 144 be 3, and the nombre that cometh ther-of schal be 48, thanne loke what is the difference be-tween 36 and 48, and ther shalt thou fynde 12; and right as 12 hath him to 12, right so the space be-tween two prikkes hath him to the altitude of the thing.

THE CANTERBURY TALES.

GROUP A. THE PROLOGUE.

HERE BIGINNETH THE BOOK OF THE TALES OF CAUNTERBURY.

WHAN that Aprille with his shoures sote
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale fowles maken melodye,
That slepen al the night with open yë,
(So priketh hem nature in hir corages):
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
(And palmers for to seken straunge strondes)
To ferne halwes, couthe in sondry londes;
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seke.

Bifel that, in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At night was come in-to that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a companye,
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle
In felawshipe, and pilgrims were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde;
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste.
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon,
That I was of hir felawshipe anon,
And made forward erly for to ryse,
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.
But natheles, whyl I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thinketh it acordaunt to resoun,
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degree;
And eek in what array that they were inne:
And at a knight than wol I first biginne.

A KNIGHT ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To ryden out, he loved chivalrye,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisye.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And therto hadde he riden (no man ferre)
As wel in Cristendom as hethenesse,
And ever honoured for his worthinesse.
At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne;
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle nacioums in Pruce.
In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
No Cristen man so ofte of his degree.
In Gernade at the sege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.

At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See
At many a noble aryve hadde he be.
At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
And foughten for our feith at Tramissene
In listes thryes, and ay slayn his foo.
This ilke worthy knight had been also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye,
Ageyn another hethen in Turkye:
And evermore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
He never yet no vileinye ne sayde
In al his lyf, un-to no maner wight.
He was a verray parfit gentil knight.
But for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors were gode, but he was nat gay.
Of fustian he wered a gipoun
Al bismotered with his habergeoun;
For he was late y-come from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrimage.

With him ther was his sone, a yong SQUYER,
A lovyere, and a lusty bacheler,
With lokkes crulle, as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly deliver, and greet of strengthe.
And he had been somtyme in chivachye,
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Picardye,
And born him wel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and rede.
Singinge he was, or floytinge, al the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his goune, with sleves longe and wyde.
Wel coude he sitte on hors, and faire ryde.
He coude songes make and wel endyte,
Iuste and eek daunce, and wel purtreye and wryte.
So hote he lovede, that by nightertale
He sleep namore than dooth a nightingale.
Curteys he was, lowly, and servisable,
And carf biforn his fader at the table.

A YEMAN hadde he, and servaunts namo
At that tyme, for him liste ryde so;
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene;
A sheef of pecok-arwes brighte and kene
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily;
(Wel coude he dresse his takel yemanly:
His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe),
And in his hand he bar a mighty bowe.
A not-heed hadde he, with a broun visage.
Of wode-craft wel coude he al the usage.
Upon his arm he bar a gay bracer,
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,
And on that other syde a gay daggere,
Harneised wel, and sharp as point of spere;
A Cristofre on his brest of silver shene.
An horn he bar, the bawdrik was of grene;
A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,
That of hir smyling was ful simple and coy;
Hir gretteste ooth was but by sëynt Loy;
And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.
Ful wel she song the service divyne,
Entuned in hir nose ful semely;
And Frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe.
At mete wel y-taught was she with-alle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fingres in hir sauce depe.
Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe,
That no drope ne fille up-on hir brest.
In curteisye was set ful muche hir lest.
Hir over lippe wyped she so clene,
That in hir coppe was no ferthing sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,
And sikerly she was of greet disport,
And ful plesaunt, and amiable of port,
And peyned hir to countrefete chere
Of court, and been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But, for to speken of hir conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She wolde wepe, if that she sawe a mous

Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
Of smale houndes had she, that she fedde
With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel-breed.
But sore weep she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte:
And al was conscience and tendre herte.
Ful semely hir wimpel pinched was; 151
Hir nose tretys; hir eyen greye as glas;
Hir mouth ful smal, and ther-to softe and reed;
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;
It was almost a spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetis was hir cloke, as I was war. 156
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene;
And ther-on heng a broche of gold ful shene, 160
On which ther was first write a crowned A,
And after, *Amor vincit omnia*.
Another NONNE with hir hadde she,
That was hir chapeleyne, and PREESTES three.
A MONK ther was, a fair for the maistrye, 165
An out-rydere, that lovede venerye;
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable:
And, whan he rood, men mighte his brydel here
Ginglen in a whistling wind as clere, 170
And eek as loude as doth the chapel-belle,
Ther as this lord was keper of the celle.
The reule of seint Maure or of seint Beneit,
By-cause that it was old and som-del streit,
This ilke monk leet olde thinges pace,
And held after the newe world the space. 176
He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,
That seith, that hunters been nat holy men;
Ne that a monk, whan he is cloisterlees,
Is lykned til a fish that is waterlees; 180
This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloistre.
But thilke text held he nat worth an oistre;
And I seyde, his opinioun was good.
What sholde he studie, and make him-selven wood, 184
Upon a book in cloistre alwey to poure,
Or swinken with his handes, and laboure,
As Austin bit? How shal the world be served?
Lat Austin have his swink to him reserved.
Therfore he was a pricasour aright;
Grehoundes he hadde, as swifte as fowel in flight; 190
Of priking and of hunting for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
I seigh his sleves purfiled at the hond
With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;
And, for to festne his hood under his chin, 195
He hadde of gold y-wroght a curious pin:
A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,
And eek his face, as he had been anoint.
He was a lord ful fat and in good point;
His eyen stepe, and rollinge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed; 202
His botes souple, his hors in greet estat.
Now certeinly he was a fair prelat;
He was nat pale as a for-pyned goost.
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.
A FRERE ther was, a wantown and a merye,
A limitour, a ful solempne man. 209
In alle the ordres foure is noon that can
So muche of daliaunce and fair langage.
He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen, at his owne cost.
Un-to his ordre he was a noble post.
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he 215
With frankeleyns over-al in his contree,
And eek with worthy wommen of the toun:
For he had power of confessioun,
As seyde him-self, more than a curat,
For his ordre he was licentiat. 220
Ful swetely herde he confessioun,

And plesaunt was his absolucioun;
He was an esy man to yeve penaunce
Ther as he wiste to han a good pitaunce;
For unto a povre ordre for to yive
Is signe that a man is wel y-shrive
For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
He wiste that a man was repentaunt.
For many a man so hard is of his herte,
He may nat wepe al-thogh him sore smerte.
Therfore, in stede of weping and preyeres,
Men moot yeve silver to the povre freres.
His tipet was ay farsed ful of knyves
And pinnes, for to yeven faire wyves.
And certeinly he hadde a mery note;
Wel coude he singe and pleyen on a rote.
Of yeddinges he bar utterly the prys.
His nekke whyt was as the flour-de-lys;
Ther-to he strong was as a champioun.
He knew the tavernes wel in every toun,
And everich hostiler and tappestere
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere;
For un-to swich a worthy man as he
Acorded nat, as by his facultee,
To have with seke lazars aqueyntaunce.
It is nat honest, it may nat avaunce
For to delen with no swich poraille,
But al with riche and sellers of vitaille.
And over-al, ther as profit sholde aryse,
Curteys he was, and lowly of servyse.
Ther nas no man no-wher so vertuous.
He was the beste beggere in his hous;
[And yaf a certeyn ferme for the graunt;
Noon of his bretheren cam ther in his haunt;]
For thogh a widwe hadde noght a sho,
So plesaunt was his *"In principio,"*
Yet wolde he have a ferthing, er he wente.
His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.
And rage he coude, as it were right a whelpe
In love-dayes ther coude he muchel helpe.
For there he was nat lyk a cloisterer,
With a thredbar cope, as is a povre scoler,
But he was lyk a maister or a pope.
Of double worsted was his semi-cope,
That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
Somwhat he lipsed, for his wantownesse,
To make his English swete up-on his tonge;
And in his harping, whan that he had songe,
His eyen twinkled in his heed aright,
As doon the sterres in the frosty night.
This worthy limitour was cleped Huberd.

A MARCHANT was ther with a forked berd,
In mottelee, and hye on horse he sat,
Up-on his heed a Flaundrish bever hat;
His botes clasped faire and fetisly.
His resons he spak ful solempnely,
Souninge alway thencrees of his winning.
He wolde the see were kept for any thing
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.
Wel coude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.
This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette;
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,
So estatly was he of his governaunce,
With his bargaynes, and with his chevisaunce.
For sothe he was a worthy man with-alle,
But sooth to seyn, I noot how men him calle.

A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also,
That un-to logik hadde longe y-go.
As lene was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake;
But loked holwe, and ther-to soberly.
Ful thredbar was his overest courtepy;
For he had geten him yet no benefyce,
Ne was so worldly for to have offyce.
For him was lever have at his beddes heed
Twenty bokes, clad in blak or reed,
Of Aristotle and his philosophye,
Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrye.
But al be that he was a philosophre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
But al that he mighte of his freendes hente,
On bokes and on lerninge he it spente,
And busily gan for the soules preye

Of hem that yaf him wher-with to scoleye.
Of studie took he most cure and most hede.
Noght o word spak he more than was nede,
And that was seyd in forme and reverence,
And short and quik, and ful of hy sentence.
Souninge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

A SERGEANT OF THE LAWE, war and wys,
That often hadde been at the parvys,
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
Discreet he was, and of greet reverence:
He semed swich, his wordes weren so wyse.
Iustyce he was ful often in assyse,
By patente, and by pleyn commissioun;
For his science, and for his heigh renoun
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.
So greet a purchasour was no-wher noon.
Al was fee simple to him in effect,
His purchasing mighte nat been infect.
No-wher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
And yet he semed bisier than he was.
In termes hadde he caas and domes alle,
That from the tyme of king William were falle.
Therto he coude endyte, and make a thing,
Ther coude no wight pinche at his wryting;
And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.
He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote
Girt with a ceint of silk, with barres smale;
Of his array telle I no lenger tale.

A FRANKELEYN was in his compānye;
Whyt was his berd, as is the dayesye.
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn.
To liven in delyt was ever his wone,
For he was Epicurus owne sone,
That heeld opinioun, that pleyn delyt
Was verraily felicitee parfyt.
An housholdere, and that a greet, was he;
Seint Iulian he was in his contree.
His breed, his ale, was alwey after oon;
A bettre envyned man was no-wher noon.
With-oute bake mete was never his hous,
Of fish and flesh, and that so plentevous,
It snewed in his hous of mete and drinke,
Of alle deyntees that men coude thinke.
After the sondry sesons of the yeer,
So chaunged he his mete and his soper.
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in mewe,
And many a breem and many a luce in stewe.
Wo was his cook, but-if his sauce were
Poynaunt and sharp, and redy al his gere.
His table dormant in his halle alway
Stood redy covered al the longe day.
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;
Ful ofte tyme he was knight of the shire.
An anlas and a gipser al of silk
Heng at his girdel, whyt as morne milk.
A shirreve hadde he been, and a countour;
Was no-wher such a worthy vavasour.

AN HABERDASSHER and a CARPENTER,
A WEBBE, a DYERE, and a TAPICER,
Were with us eek, clothed in o liveree,
Of a solempne and greet fraternitee.
Ful fresh and newe hir gere apyked was;
Hir knyves were y-chaped noght with bras,
But al with silver, wroght ful clene and weel
Hir girdles and hir pouches every-deel.
Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys,
To sitten in a yeldhalle on a deys.
Everich, for the wisdom that he can,
Was shaply for to been an alderman.
For catel hadde they y-nogh and rente,
And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente;
And elles certein were they to blame.
It is ful fair to been y-clept "*ma dame*,"
And goon to vigilyës al bifore,
And have a mantel royalliche y-bore.

A COOK they hadde with hem for the nones,

To boille the chiknes with the marybones,
And poudre-marchant tart, and galingale.
Wel coude he knowe a draughte of London ale.
He coude roste, and sethe, and broille, and frye,
Maken mortreux, and wel bake a pye.
But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,
That on his shine a mormal hadde he;
For blankmanger, that made he with the beste.

A SHIPMAN was ther, woning fer by weste:
For aught I woot, he was of Dertemouthe.
He rood up-on a rouncy, as he couthe,
In a gowne of falding to the knee.
A daggere hanging on a laas hadde he
Aboute his nekke under his arm adoun.
The hote somer had maad his hewe al broun;
And, certeinly, he was a good felawe.
Ful many a draughte of wyn had he y-drawe
From Burdeux-ward, whyl that the chapman sleep.
Of nyce conscience took he no keep.
If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond,
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.
But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,
His stremes and his daungers him bisydes,
His herberwe and his mone, his lodemenage,
Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake;
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake.
He knew wel alle the havenes, as they were,
From Gootland to the cape of Finistere,
And every cryke in Britayne and in Spayne;
His barge y-cleped was the Maudelayne.

With us ther was a DOCTOUR OF PHISYK,
In al this world ne was ther noon him lyk
To speke of phisik and of surgerye;
For he was grounded in astronomye.
He kepte his pacient a ful greet del
In houres, by his magik naturel.
Wel coude he fortunen the ascendent
Of his images for his pacient.
He knew the cause of everich maladye,
Were it of hoot or cold, or moiste, or drye,
And where engendred, and of what humour;
He was a verrey parfit practisour.
The cause y-knowe, and of his harm the rote,
Anon he yaf the seke man his bote.
Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries,
To sende him drogges and his letuaries,
For ech of hem made other for to winne;
Hir frendschipe nas nat newe to biginne.
Wel knew he the olde Esculapius,
And Deiscorides, and eek Rufus,
Old Ypocras, Haly, and Galien;
Serapion, Razis, and Avicen;
Averrois, Damascien, and Constantyn;
Bernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn.
Of his diete mesurable was he,
For it was of no superfluitee,
But of greet norissing and digestible.
His studie was but litel on the Bible.
In sangwin and in pers he clad was al,
Lyned with taffata and with sendal;
And yet he was but esy of dispence;
He kepte that he wan in pestilence.
For gold in phisik is a cordial,
Therfore he lovede gold in special.

A good WYF was ther of bisyde BATHE,
But she was som-del deef, and that was scathe.
Of clooth-making she hadde swiche an haunt,
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In al the parisshe wyf ne was ther noon
That to the offring bifore hir sholde goon;
And if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hir coverchiefs ful fyne were of ground;
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound
That on a Sonday were upon hir heed.
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,

Ful streite y-teyd, and shoos ful moiste and newe.
Bold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,
Housbondes at chirche-dore she hadde fyve,
Withouten other companye in youthe;
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nouthe.
And thryes hadde she been at Ierusalem;
She hadde passed many a straunge streem;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at seint Iame, and at Cologne.
She coude muche of wandring by the weye:
Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
Up-on an amblere esily she sat,
Y-wimpled wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.
In felawschip wel coude she laughe and carpe.
Of remedyes of love she knew per-chaunce,
For she coude of that art the olde daunce.

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a povre PERSOUN of a toun;
But riche he was of holy thoght and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parisshens devoutly wolde he teche,
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient;
And swich he was y-preved ofte sythes.
Ful looth were him to cursen for his tythes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Un-to his povre parisshens aboute
Of his offring, and eek of his substaunce.
He coude in litel thing han suffisaunce.
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer a-sonder,
But he ne lafte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
In siknes nor in meschief, to visyte
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lyte,
Up-on his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,
That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte;
Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte;
And this figure he added eek ther-to,
That if gold ruste, what shal iren do?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;
And shame it is, if a preest take keep,
A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive,
By his clennesse, how that his sheep shold live.
He sette nat his benefice to hyre,
And leet his sheep encombred in the myre,
And ran to London, un-to sëynt Poules,
To seken him a chaunterie for soules,
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde;
But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,
So that the wolf ne made it nat miscarie;
He was a shepherde and no mercenarie.
And though he holy were, and vertuous,
He was to sinful man nat despitous,
Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,
But in his teching discreet and benigne.
To drawen folk to heven by fairnesse
By good ensample, was his bisinesse:
But it were any persone obstinat,
What-so he were, of heigh or lowe estat,
Him wolde he snibben sharply for the nones.
A bettre preest, I trowe that nowher noon is.
He wayted after no pompe and reverence,
Ne maked him a spyced conscience,
But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taughte, and first he folwed it himselve.

With him ther was a PLOWMAN, was his brother,
That hadde y-lad of dong ful many a fother,
A trewe swinker and a good was he,
Livinge in pees and parfit charitee.
God loved he best with al his hole herte
At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,

And thanne his neighebour right as himselve.
He wolde thresshe, and ther-to dyke and delve,
For Cristes sake, for every povre wight,
Withouten hyre, if it lay in his might.
His tythes payed he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his propre swink and his catel.
In a tabard he rood upon a mere.

Ther was also a Reve and a Millere,
A Somnour and a Pardoner also,
A Maunciple, and my-self; ther were namo.

The MILLER was a stout carl, for the nones,
Ful big he was of braun, and eek of bones;
That proved wel, for over-al ther he cam,
At wrastling he wolde have alwey the ram.
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre,
Ther nas no dore that he nolde heve of harre,
Or breke it, at a renning, with his heed.
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,
And ther-to brood, as though it were a spade.
Up-on the cop right of his nose he hade
A werte, and ther-on stood a tuft of heres,
Reed as the bristles of a sowes eres;
His nose-thirles blake were and wyde.
A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde;
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys.
He was a Ianglere and a goliardeys,
And that was most of sinne and harlotryes.
Wel coude he stelen corn, and tollen thryes;
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.
A whyt cote and a blew hood wered he.
A baggepype wel coude he blowe and sowne,
And ther-with-al he broghte us out of towne.

A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a temple,
Of which achatours mighte take exemple
For to be wyse in bying of vitaille.
For whether that he payde, or took by taille,
Algate he wayted so in his achat,
That he was ay biforn and in good stat.
Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace,
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wisdom of an heep of lerned men?
Of maistres hadde he mo than thryes ten,
That were of lawe expert and curious;
Of which ther were a doseyn in that hous,
Worthy to been stiwardes of rente and lond
Of any lord that is in Engelond,
To make him live by his propre good,
In honour dettelees, but he were wood,
Or live as scarsly as him list desire;
And able for to helpen al a shire
In any cas that mighte falle or happe;
And yit this maunciple sette hir aller cappe.

The REVE was a sclendre colerik man,
His berd was shave as ny as ever he can.
His heer was by his eres round y-shorn.
His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn.
Ful longe were his legges, and ful lene,
Y-lyk a staf, ther was no calf y-sene.
Wel coude he kepe a gerner and a binne;
Ther was noon auditour coude on him winne.
Wel wiste he, by the droghte, and by the reyn,
The yelding of his seed, and of his greyn.
His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayerye,
His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his pultrye,
Was hoolly in this reves governing,
And by his covenaunt yaf the rekening,
Sin that his lord was twenty yeer of age;
Ther coude no man bringe him in arrerage.
Ther nas baillif, ne herde, ne other hyne,
That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne;
They were adrad of him, as of the deeth.
His woning was ful fair up-on an heeth,
With grene trees shadwed was his place.
He coude bettre than his lord purchace.
Ful riche he was astored prively,
His lord wel coude he plesen subtilly,
To yeve and lene him of his owne good,

And have a thank, and yet a cote and hood.
In youthe he lerned hadde a good mister;
He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
This reve sat up-on a ful good stot,
That was al pomely grey, and highte Scot.
A long surcote of pers up-on he hade,
And by his syde he bar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this reve, of which I telle,
Bisyde a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.
Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboute,
And ever he rood the hindreste of our route.
A SOMNOUR was ther with us in that place,
That hadde a fyr-reed cherubinnes face,
For sawcefleem he was, with eyen narwe.
As hoot he was, and lecherous, as a sparwe;
With scalled browes blake, and piled berd;
Of his visage children were aferd.
Ther nas quik-silver, litarge, ne brimstoon,
Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon,
Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte,
That him mighte helpen of his whelkes whyte,
Nor of the knobbes sittinge on his chekes.
Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,
And for to drinken strong wyn, reed as blood.
Thanne wolde he speke, and crye as he were wood.
And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
A fewe termes hadde he, two or three,
That he had lerned out of som decree;
No wonder is, he herde it al the day;
And eek ye knowen wel, how that a Iay
Can clepen 'Watte,' as well as can the pope.
But who-so coude in other thing him grope,
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophye;
Ay '*Questio quid iuris*' wolde he crye.
He was a gentil harlot and a kinde;
A bettre felawe sholde men noght finde.
He wolde suffre, for a quart of wyn,
A good felawe to have his concubyn
A twelf-month, and excuse him atte fulle:
Ful prively a finch eek coude he pulle.
And if he fond o-wher a good felawe,
He wolde techen him to have non awe,
In swich cas, of the erchedeknes curs,
But-if a mannes soule were in his purs;
For in his purs he sholde y-punisshed be.
'Purs is the erchedeknes helle,' seyde he.
But wel I woot he lyed right in dede;
Of cursing oghte ech gilty man him drede —
For curs wol slee, right as assoilling saveth —
And also war him of a *significavit*.
In daunger hadde he at his owne gyse
The yonge girles of the diocyse,
And knew hir counseil, and was al hir reed.
A gerland hadde he set up-on his heed,
As greet as it were for an ale-stake;
A bokeler hadde he maad him of a cake.
With him ther rood a gentil PARDONER
Of Rouncival, his freend and his compeer,
That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.
Ful loude he song, 'Com hider, love, to me.'
This somnour bar to him a stif burdoun,
Was never trompe of half so greet a soun.
This pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,
But smothe it heng, as dooth a strike of flex;
By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde,
And ther-with he his shuldres over-spradde;
But thinne it lay, by colpons oon and oon;
But hood, for Iolitee, ne wered he noon,
For it was trussed up in his walet.
Him thoughte, he rood al of the newe Iet;
Dischevele, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
Swiche glaringe eyen hadde he as an hare.
A vernicle hadde he sowed on his cappe.

His walet lay biforn him in his lappe,
Bret-ful of pardoun come from Rome al hoot.
A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.
No berd hadde he, ne never sholde have,
As smothe it was as it were late y-shave;
I trowe he were a gelding or a mare.
But of his craft, fro Berwik into Ware,
Ne was ther swich another pardoner.
For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,
Which that, he seyde, was our lady veyl:
He seyde, he hadde a gobet of the seyl
That sëynt Peter hadde, whan that he wente
Up-on the see, til Iesu Crist him hente.
He hadde a croys of latoun, ful of stones,
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.
But with thise relikes, whan that he fond
A povre person dwelling up-on lond,
Up-on a day he gat him more moneye
Than that the person gat in monthes tweye.
And thus, with feyned flaterye and Iapes,
He made the person and the peple his apes.
But trewely to tellen, atte laste,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste.
Wel coude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
But alderbest he song an offertorie;
For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,
He moste preche, and wel affyle his tonge,
To winne silver, as he ful wel coude;
Therefore he song so meriely and loude.
Now have I told you shortly, in a clause,
Thestat, tharray, the nombre, and eek the cause
Why that assembled was this companye
In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,
That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle.
But now is tyme to yow for to telle
How that we baren us that ilke night,
Whan we were in that hostelrye alight.
And after wol I telle of our viage,
And al the rememaunt of our pilgrimage.
But first I pray yow, of your curteisye,
That ye narette it nat my vileinye,
Thogh that I pleynly speke in this matere,
To telle yow hir wordes and hir chere;
Ne thogh I speke hir wordes properly.
For this ye knowen al-so wel as I,
Who-so shal telle a tale after a man,
He moot reherce, as ny as ever he can,
Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
Al speke he never so rudeliche and large;
Or elles he moot telle his tale untrewe,
Or feyne thing, or finde wordes newe.
He may nat spare, al-thogh he were his brother;
He moot as wel seye o word as another.
Crist spak him-self ful brode in holy writ,
And wel ye woot, no vileinye is it.
Eek Plato seith, who-so that can him rede,
The wordes mote be cosin to the dede.
Also I prey yow to foryeve it me,
Al have I nat set folk in hir degree
Here in this tale, as that they sholde stonde;
My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.
Greet chere made our hoste us everichon,
And to the soper sette he us anon;
And served us with vitaille at the beste.
Strong was the wyn, and wel to drinke us leste.
A semely man our hoste was with-alle
For to han been a marshal in an halle;
A large man he was with eyen stepe,
A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe:
Bold of his speche, and wys, and wel y-taught,
And of manhood him lakkede right naught.
Eek therto he was right a mery man,
And after soper pleyen he bigan,
And spak of mirthe amonges othere thinges,
Whan that we hadde maad our rekeninges;
And seyde thus: 'Now, lordinges, trewely,
Ye been to me right welcome hertely:
For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
I ne saugh this yeer so mery a companye

At ones in this herberwe as is now.
Fayn wolde I doon yow mirthe, wiste I how.
And of a mirthe I am right now bithoght,
To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.
Ye goon to Caunterbury; God yow spede,
The blisful martir quyte yow your mede.
And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;
For trewely, confort ne mirthe is noon
To ryde by the weye doumb as a stoon;
And therfore wol I maken yow disport,
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort.
And if yow lyketh alle, by oon assent,
Now for to stonden at my Iugement,
And for to werken as I shal yow seye,
To-morwe, whan ye ryden by the weye,
Now, by my fader soule, that is deed,
But ye be merye, I wol yeve yow myn heed.
Hold up your hond, withouten more speche.'
Our counseil was nat longe for to seche;
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys,
And graunted him withouten more avys,
And bad him seye his verdit, as him leste.
'Lordinges,' quod he, 'now herkneth for the beste;
But tak it not, I prey yow, in desdeyn;
This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn
That ech of yow, to shorte with your weye,
In this viage, shal telle tales tweye,
To Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,
And hom-ward he shal tellen othere two,
Of aventures that whylom han bifalle.
And which of yow that bereth him best of alle,
That is to seyn, that telleth in this cas
Tales of best sentence and most solas,
Shal have a soper at our aller cost
Here in this place, sitting by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
And for to make yow the more mery,
I wol my-selven gladly with yow ryde,
Right at myn owne cost, and be your gyde.
And who-so wol my Iugement withseye
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
And if ye vouche-sauf that it be so,
Tel me anon, with-outen wordes mo,
And I wol erly shape me therfore.'
This thing was graunted, and our othes swore
With ful glad herte, and preyden him also
That he wold vouche-sauf for to do so,
And that he wolde been our governour,
And of our tales Iuge and reportour,
And sette a soper at a certeyn prys;
And we wold reuled been at his devys,
In heigh and lowe; and thus, by oon assent,
We been acorded to his Iugement.
And ther-up-on the wyn was fet anon;
We dronken, and to reste wente echon,
With-outen any lenger taryinge.
A-morwe, whan that day bigan to springe,
Up roos our host, and was our aller cok,
And gadrede us togidre, alle in a flok,
And forth we riden, a litel more than pas,
Un-to the watering of seint Thomas.
And there our host bigan his hors areste,
And seyde; 'Lordinges, herkneth, if yow leste.
Ye woot your forward, and I it yow recorde.
If even-song and morwe-song acorde,
Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.
As ever mote I drinke wyn or ale,
Who-so be rebel to my Iugement
Shal paye for al that by the weye is spent.
Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer twinne;
He which that hath the shortest shal biginne.
Sire knight,' quod he, 'my maister and my lord,
Now draweth cut, for that is myn acord.

Cometh neer,' quod he, 'my lady prioresse;
And ye, sir clerk, lat be your shamfastnesse,
Ne studieth noght; ley hond to, every man.'
Anon to drawen every wight bigan,
And shortly for to tellen, as it was,
Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,
The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knight,
Of which ful blythe and glad was every wight;
And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,
By forward and by composicioun,
As ye han herd; what nedeth wordes mo?
And whan this gode man saugh it was so,
As he that wys was and obedient
To kepe his forward by his free assent,
He seyde: 'Sin I shal biginne the game,
What, welcome be the cut, a Goddes name!
Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I seye.'
And with that word we riden forth our weye;
And he bigan with right a mery chere
His tale anon, and seyde in this manere.

Here endeth the prolog of this book; and here biginneth the first tale, which is the Knightes Tale.

THE KNIGHTES TALE.

Iamque domos patrias, Scithice post aspera gentis
Prelia, laurigero, &c.

[Statius, *Theb.* xii. 519.]

Whylom, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus;
Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
And in his tyme swich a conquerour,
That gretter was ther noon under the sonne.
Ful many a riche contree hadde he wonne;
What with his wisdom and his chivalrye,
He conquered al the regne of Femenye,
That whylom was y-cleped Scithia;
And weddede the quene Ipolita,
And broghte hir hoom with him in his contree
With muchel glorie and greet solempnitee,
And eek hir yonge suster Emelye.
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duk to Athenes ryde,
And al his hoost, in armes, him bisyde.
And certes, if it nere to long to here,
I wolde han told yow fully the manere,
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye
By Theseus, and by his chivalrye;
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bitwixen Athenës and Amazones;
And how asseged was Ipolita,
The faire hardy quene of Scithia;
And of the feste that was at hir weddinge,
And of the tempest at hir hoom-cominge;
But al that thing I moot as now forbere.
I have, God woot, a large feeld to ere,
And wayke been the oxen in my plough.
The remenant of the tale is long y-nough.
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route;
Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute,
And lat see now who shal the soper winne;
And ther I lefte, I wol ageyn biginne.
This duk, of whom I make mencioun,
When he was come almost unto the toun,
In al his wele and in his moste pryde,
He was war, as he caste his eye asyde,
Wher that ther kneled in the hye weye
A companye of ladies, tweye and tweye,
Ech after other, clad in clothes blake;

But swich a cry and swich a wo they make,
That in this world nis creature livinge,
That herde swich another weymentinge;
And of this cry they nolde never stenten,
Til they the reynes of his brydel henten.
'What folk ben ye, that at myn hoom-cominge
Perturben so my feste with cryinge?'
Quod Theseus, 'have ye so greet envye
Of myn honour, that thus compleyne and crye?
Or who hath yow misboden, or offended?
And telleth me if it may been amended;
And why that ye ben clothed thus in blak?'
The eldest lady of hem alle spak,
When she hadde swowned with a deedly chere,
That it was routhe for to seen and here,
And seyde: 'Lord, to whom Fortune hath yiven
Victorie, and as a conquerour to liven,
Noght greveth us your glorie and your honour;
But we biseken mercy and socour.
Have mercy on our wo and our distresse.
Som drope of pitee, thurgh thy gentillesse,
Up-on us wrecched wommen lat thou falle.
For certes, lord, ther nis noon of us alle,
That she nath been a duchesse or a quene;
Now be we caitifs, as it is wel sene:
Thanked be Fortune, and hir false wheel,
That noon estat assureth to be weel.
And certes, lord, to abyden your presence,
Here in the temple of the goddesse Clemence
We han ben waytinge al this fourtenight;
Now help us, lord, sith it is in thy might.
I wrecche, which that wepe and waille thus,
Was whylom wyf to king Capaneus,
That starf at Thebes, cursed be that day!
And alle we, that been in this array,
And maken al this lamentacioun,
We losten alle our housbondes at that toun,
Whyl that the sege ther-aboute lay.

And yet now the olde Creon, weylaway!
That lord is now of Thebes the citee,
Fulfild of ire and of iniquitee,
He, for despyt, and for his tirannye,
To do the dede bodyes vileinye,
Of alle our lordes, whiche that ben slawe,
Hath alle the bodyes on an heep y-drawe,
And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent,
Neither to been y-buried nor y-brent,
But maketh houndes ete hem in despyt.'
And with that word, with-outen more respyt,
They fillen gruf, and cryden pitously,
'Have on us wrecched wommen som mercy,
And lat our sorwe sinken in thyn herte.'
This gentil duk doun from his courser sterte
With herte pitous, whan he herde hem speke.
Him thoughte that his herte wolde breke,
Whan he saugh hem so pitous and so mat,
That whylom weren of so greet estat.
And in his armes he hem alle up hente,
And hem comforteth in ful good entente;
And swoor his ooth, as he was trewe knight,
He wolde doon so ferforthly his might
Up-on the tyraunt Creon hem to wreke,
That al the peple of Grece sholde speke
How Creon was of Theseus y-served,
As he that hadde his deeth ful wel deserved.
And right anoon, with-outen more abood,
His baner he desplayeth, and forth rood
To Thebes-ward, and al his host bisyde;
No neer Athenës wolde he go ne ryde,
Ne take his ese fully half a day,
But onward on his wey that night he lay;
And sente anoon Ipolita the quene,
And Emelye hir yonge suster shene,
Un-to the toun of Athenës to dwelle;
And forth he rit; ther nis namore to telle.
The rede statue of Mars, with spere and targe,
So shyneth in his whyte baner large,
That alle the feeldes gliteren up and doun;
And by his baner born is his penoun

Of gold ful riche, in which ther was y-bete
The Minotaur, which that he slough in Crete.
Thus rit this duk, thus rit this conquerour,
And in his host of chivalrye the flour,
Til that he cam to Thebes, and alighte
Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoghte fighte.
But shortly for to speken of this thing,
With Creon, which that was of Thebes king,
He faught, and slough him manly as a knight
In pleyn bataille, and putte the folk to flight;
And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rente adoun bothe wal, and sparre, and rafter;
And to the ladyes he restored agayn
The bones of hir housbondes that were slayn,
To doon obsequies, as was tho the gyse.
But it were al to long for to devyse
The grete clamour and the wayment-inge
That the ladyes made at the brenninge
Of the bodyes, and the grete honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,
Doth to the ladyes, whan they from him wente;
But shortly for to telle is myn entente.
Whan that this worthy duk, this Theseus,
Hath Creon slayn, and wonne Thebes thus,
Stille in that feeld he took al night his reste,
And dide with al the contree as him leste.
To ransake in the tas of bodyes dede,
Hem for to strepe of harneys and of wede,
The pilours diden bisinesse and cure,
After the bataille and disconfiture.
And so bifel, that in the tas they founde,
Thurgh-girt with many a grevous blody wounde,
Two yonge knightes ligging by and by,
Bothe in oon armes, wroght ful richely,
Of whiche two, Arcita hight that oon,
And that other knight hight Palamon.
Nat fully quike, ne fully dede they were,
But by hir cote-armures, and by hir gere,
The heraudes knewe hem best in special,
As they that weren of the blood royal
Of Thebes, and of sustren two y-born.
Out of the tas the pilours han hem torn,
And han hem caried softe un-to the tente
Of Theseus, and he ful sone hem sente
To Athenës, to dwellen in prisoun
Perpetuelly, he nolde no raunsoun.
And whan this worthy duk hath thus y-don,
He took his host, and hoom he rood anon
With laurer crowned as a conquerour;
And there he liveth, in Ioye and in honour,
Terme of his lyf; what nedeth wordes mo?
And in a tour, in angwish and in wo,
Dwellen this Palamoun and eek Arcite,
For evermore, ther may no gold hem quyte.
This passeth yeer by yeer, and day by day,
Til it fil ones, in a morwe of May,
That Emelye, that fairer was to sene
Than is the lilie upon his stalke grene,
And fressher than the May with floures newe —
For with the rose colour stroof hir hewe,
I noot which was the fairer of hem two —
Er it were day, as was hir wone to do,
She was arisen, and al redy dight;
For May wol have no slogardye a-night.
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh him out of his sleep to sterte,
And seith, 'Arys, and do thyn obser-vaunce.'
This maked Emelye have remembraunce
To doon honour to May, and for to ryse.
Y-clothed was she fresh, for to devyse;
Hir yelow heer was broyded in a tresse,
Behinde hir bak, a yerde long, I gesse.
And in the gardin, at the sonne up-riste,
She walketh up and doun, and as hir liste
She gadereth floures, party whyte and rede,
To make a sotil gerland for hir hede,
And as an aungel hevenly she song.
The grete tour, that was so thikke and strong,

Which of the castel was the chief dongeoun,
(Ther-as the knightes weren in prisoun,
Of whiche I tolde yow, and tellen shal)
Was evene loynant to the gardin-wal,
Ther as this Emelye hadde hir pleyinge.
Bright was the sonne, and cleer that morweninge,
And Palamon, this woful prisoner,
As was his wone, by leve of his gayler,
Was risen, and romed in a chambre on heigh,
In which he al the noble citee seigh,
And eek the gardin, ful of braunches grene,
Ther-as this fresshe Emelye the shene
Was in hir walk, and romed up and doun.
This sorweful prisoner, this Palamoun,
Goth in the chambre, roming to and fro,
And to him-self compleyning of his wo;
That he was born, ful ofte he seyde, 'alas!'
And so bifel, by aventure or cas,
That thurgh a window, thikke of many a barre
Of yren greet, and square as any sparre,
He caste his eye upon Emelya,
And ther-with-al he bleynte, and cryde 'a!'
As though he stongen were un-to the herte.
And with that cry Arcite anon up-sterte,
And seyde, 'Cosin myn, what eyleth thee,
That art so pale and deedly on to see?
Why crydestow? who hath thee doon offence?
For Goddes love, tak al in pacience
Our prisoun, for it may non other be;
Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.
Som wikke aspect or disposicioun
Of Saturne, by sum constellacioun,
Hath yeven us this, al-though we hadde it sworn;
So stood the heven whan that we were born;
We moste endure it: this is the short and pleyn.'
This Palamon answerde, and seyde ageyn,
'Cosyn, for sothe, of this opinioun
Thou hast a veyn imaginacioun.
This prison caused me nat for to crye.
But I was hurt right now thurgh-out myn yë
In-to myn herte, that wol my bane be.
The fairnesse of that lady that I see
Yond in the gardin romen to and fro,
Is cause of al my crying and my wo.
I noot wher she be womman or goddesse;
But Venus is it, soothly, as I gesse.'
And ther-with-al on kneës doun he fil,
And seyde: 'Venus, if it be thy wil
Yow in this gardin thus to transfigure
Bifore me, sorweful wrecche creature,
Out of this prisoun help that we may scapen.
And if so be my destinee be shapen
By eterne word to dyen in prisoun,
Of our linage have som compassioun,
That is so lowe y-brought by tirannye.'
And with that word Arcite gan espye
Wher-as this lady romed to and fro.
And with that sighte hir beautee hurte him so,
That, if that Palamon was wounded sore,
Arcite is hurt as muche as he, or more.
And with a sigh he seyde pitously:
'The fresshe beautee sleeth me sodeynly
Of hir that rometh in the yonder place;
And, but I have hir mercy and hir grace,
That I may seen hir atte leeste weye,
I nam but deed; ther nis namore to seye.'
This Palamon, whan he tho wordes herde,
Dispitously he loked, and answerde:
'Whether seistow this in ernest or in pley?'
'Nay,' quod Arcite, 'in ernest, by my fey!
God help me so, me list ful yvele pleye.'
This Palamon gan knitte his browes tweye:
'It nere,' quod he, 'to thee no greet honour
For to be fals, ne for to be traytour
To me, that am thy cosin and thy brother
Y-sworn ful depe, and ech of us til other,
That never, for to dyen in the peyne,
Til that the deeth departe shal us tweyne,
Neither of us in love to hindren other,
Ne in non other cas, my leve brother;
But that thou sholdest trewely forthren me

In every cas, and I shal forthren thee.
This was thyn ooth, and myn also, certeyn;
I wot right wel,' thou darst it nat withseyn.
Thus artow of my counseil, out of doute.
And now thou woldest falsly been aboute
To love my lady, whom I love and serve,
And ever shal, til that myn herte sterve.
Now certes, fals Arcite, thou shalt nat so.
I loved hir first, and tolde thee my wo
As to my counseil, and my brother sworn
To forthre me, as I have told biforn.
For which thou art y-bounden as a knight
To helpen me, if it lay in thy might,
Or elles artow fals, I dar wel seyn.'
This Arcitë ful proudly spak ageyn,
'Thou shalt,' quod he, 'be rather fals than I;
But thou art fals, I telle thee utterly;
For *par amour* I loved hir first er thow.
What wiltow seyn? thou wistest nat yet now
Whether she be a womman or goddesse!
Thyn is affeccioun of holinesse,
And myn is love, as to a creature;
For which I tolde thee myn aventure
As to my cosin, and my brother sworn.
I pose, that thou lovedest hir biforn;
Wostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,
That 'who shal yeve a lover any lawe?'
Love is a gretter lawe, by my pan,
Than may be yeve to any erthly man.
And therefore positif lawe and swich decree
Is broke al-day for love, in ech degree.
A man moot nedes love, maugree his heed.
He may nat fleen it, thogh he sholde be deed,
Al be she mayde, or widwe, or elles wyf.
And eek it is nat lykly, al thy lyf,
To stonden in hir grace; namore shal I;
For wel thou woost thy-selven, verrailly,
That thou and I be dampned to prisoun
Perpetuelly; us gayneth no raunsoun.
We stryve as dide the houndes for the boon,
They foughte al day, and yet hir part was noon;
Ther cam a kyte, whyl that they were wrothe,
And bar awey the boon bitwixe hem bothe.
And therfore, at the kinges court, my brother,
Ech man for him-self, ther is non other.
Love if thee list; for I love and ay shal;
And soothly, leve brother, this is al.
Here in this prisoun mote we endure,
And everich of us take his aventure.'
Greet was the stryf and long bitwixe hem tweye,
If that I hadde leyser for to seye;
But to theffect. It happed on a day,
(To telle it yow as shortly as I may)
A worthy duk that highte Peroteus,
That felawe was un-to duk Theseus
Sin thilke day that they were children lyte,
Was come to Athenes, his felawe to visyte,
And for to pleye, as he was wont to do,
For in this world he loved no man so:
And he loved him as tendrely ageyn.
So wel they loved, as olde bokes seyn,
That whan that oon was deed, sothly to telle,
His felawe wente and soghte him doun in helle;
But of that story list me nat to wryte.
Duk Peroteus loved wel Arcite,
And hadde him knowe at Thebes yeer by yere;
And fynally, at requeste and preyere
Of Peroteus, with-oute any raunsoun,
Duk Theseus him leet out of prisoun,
Freely to goon, wher that him liste overal,
In swich a gyse, as I you tellen shal.
This was the forward, pleynly for tendyte,
Bitwixen Theseus and him Arcite:
That if so were, that Arcite were y-founde
Ever in his lyf, by day or night or stounde
In any contree of this Theseus,
And he were caught, it was acorded thus,
That with a swerd he sholde lese his heed;
Ther nas non other remedye ne reed,

But taketh his leve, and homward he him spedde;
Let him be war, his nekke lyth to wedde!
How greet a sorwe suffreth now Arcite!
The deeth he feleth thurgh his herte smyte;
He wepeth, wayleth, cryeth pitously;
To sleen him-self he wayteth prively.
He seyde, 'Allas that day that I was born!
Now is my prison worse than biforn;
Now is me shape eternally to dwelle
Noght in purgatorie, but in helle.
Allas! that ever knew I Perotheus!
For elles hadde I dwelled with Theseus
Y-fetered in his prisoun ever-mo.
Than hadde I been in blisse, and nat in wo.
Only the sighte of hir, whom that I serve,
Though that I never hir grace may deserve,
Wolde han suffised right y-nough for me.
O dere cosin Palamon,' quod he,
'Thyn is the victorie of this aventure,
Ful blisfully in prison maistow dure;
In prison? certes nay, but in paradys!
Wel hath fortune y-turned thee the dys,
That hast the sighte of hir, and I thabsence.
For possible is, sin thou hast hir presence,
And art a knight, a worthy and an able,
That by som cas, sin fortune is chaungeable,
Thou mayst to thy desyr som-tyme atteyne.
But I, that am exyled, and bareyne
Of alle grace, and in so greet despeir,
That ther nis erthe, water, fyr, ne eir,
Ne creature, that of hem maked is,
That may me helpe or doon confort in this.
Wel oughte I sterve in wanhope and distresse;
Farwel my lyf, my lust, and my gladnesse!
Allas, why pleynen folk so in commune
Of purveyaunce of God, or of fortune,
That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse
Wel bettre than they can hem-self devyse?
Som man desyreth for to han richesse,
That cause is of his mordre or greet siknesse.
And som man wolde out of his prison fayn,
That in his hous is of his meynee slayn.
Infinite harmes been in this matere;
We witen nat what thing we preyen here.
We faren as he that dronke is as a mous;
A dronke man wot wel he hath an hous,
But he noot which the righte wey is thider;
And to a dronke man the wey is slider.
And certes, in this world so faren we;
We seken faste after felicitee,
But we goon wrong ful often, trewely.
Thus may we seyen alle, and namely I,
That wende and hadde a greet opinioun,
That, if I mighte escapen from prisoun,
Than hadde I been in Ioye and perfit hele,
Ther now I am exyled fro my wele.
Sin that I may nat seen yow, Emelye,
I nam but deed; ther nis no remedye.'
Up-on that other syde Palamon,
Whan that he wiste Arcite was agon,
Swich sorwe he maketh, that the grete tour
Resouneth of his youling and clamour.
The pure fettres on his shines grete
Weren of his bittre salte teres wete.
'Allas!' quod he, 'Arcita, cosin myn,
Of al our stryf, God woot, the fruyt is thyn.
Thow walkest now in Thebes at thy large,
And of my wo thou yevest litel charge.
Thou mayst, sin thou hast wisdom and manhede,
Assemblen alle the folk of our kinrede,
And make a werre so sharp on this citee,
That by som aventure, or som tretee,
Thou mayst have hir to lady and to wyf,
For whom that I mot nedes lese my lyf.
For, as by wey of possibilitee,
Sith thou art at thy large, of prison free,
And art a lord, greet is thyn avauntage,
More than is myn, that sterve here in a cage.
For I mot wepe and wayle, whyl I live,
With al the wo that prison may me yive,

And eek with peyne that love me yiveth also,
That doubleth al my torment and my wo.'
Ther-with the fyr of Ielousye up-sterte
With-inne his brest, and hente him by the herte
So woodly, that he lyk was to biholde
The box-tree, or the asshen dede and colde.
Tho seyde he; 'O cruel goddes, that governe
This world with binding of your word eterne,
And wryten in the table of athamaunt
Your parlement, and your eterne graunt,
What is mankinde more un-to yow holde
Than is the sheep, that rouketh in the folde?
For slayn is man right as another beste,
And dwelleth eek in prison and areste,
And hath siknesse, and greet adversitee,
And ofte tymes giltelees, pardee!
What governaunce is in this prescience,
That giltelees tormenteth innocence?
And yet encreseth this al my penaunce,
That man is bounden to his observaunce,
For Goddes sake, to letten of his wille,
Ther as a beest may al his lust fulfille.
And whan a beest is deed, he hath no peyne;
But man after his deeth moot wepe and pleyne,
Though in this world he have care and wo:
With-outen doute it may stonden so.
The answere of this I lete to divynis,
But wel I woot, that in this world gret pyne is.
Allas! I see a serpent or a theef,
That many a trewe man hath doon mescheef,
Goon at his large, and wher him list may turne.
But I mot been in prison thurgh Saturne,
And eek thurgh Iuno, Ialous and eek wood,
That hath destroyed wel ny al the blood
Of Thebes, with his waste walles wyde.
And Venus sleeth me on that other syde
For Ielousye, and fere of him Arcite.'
Now wol I stinte of Palamon a lyte,
And lete him in his prison stille dwelle,
And of Arcita forth I wol yow telle.
The somer passeth, and the nightes longe
Encresen double wyse the peynes stronge
Bothe of the lovere and the prisoner.
I noot which hath the wofullere mester.
For shortly for to seyn, this Palamoun
Perpetuelly is dampned to prisoun,
In cheynes and in fettres to ben deed;
And Arcite is exyled upon his heed
For ever-mo as out of that contree,
Ne never-mo he shal his lady see.
Yow loveres axe I now this questioun,
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamoun?
That oon may seen his lady day by day,
But in prison he moot dwelle alway.
That other wher him list may ryde or go,
But seen his lady shal he never-mo.
Now demeth as yow liste, ye that can,
For I wol telle forth as I bigan.

Explicit prima Pars. Sequitur pars secunda.

Whan that Arcite to Thebes comen was,
Ful ofte a day he swelte and seyde 'allas,'
For seen his lady shal he never-mo.
And shortly to concluden al his wo,
So muche sorwe had never creature
That is, or shal, whyl that the world may dure.
His sleep, his mete, his drink is him biraft,
That lene he wex, and drye as is a shaft.
His eyen holwe, and grisly to biholde;
His hewe falwe, and pale as asshen colde,
And solitarie he was, and ever allone,
And wailling al the night, making his mone.
And if he herde song or instrument,
Then wolde he wepe, he mighte nat be stent;
So feble eek were his spirits, and so lowe,
And chaunged so, that no man coude knowe
His speche nor his vois, though men it herde.
And in his gere, for al the world he

Nat oonly lyk the loveres maladye
Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye
Engendred of humour malencolyk,
Biforen, in his celle fantastyk.
And shortly, turned was al up-so-doun
Bothe habit and eek disposicioun
Of him, this woful lovere daun Arcite.
What sholde I al-day of his wo endyte?
Whan he endured hadde a yeer or two
This cruel torment, and this peyne and wo,
At Thebes, in his contree, as I seyde,
Up-on a night, in sleep as he him leyde,
Him thoughte how that the winged god Mercurie
Biforn him stood, and bad him to be murye.
His slepy yerde in hond he bar uprighte;
An hat he werede up-on his heres brighte.
Arrayed was this god (as he took keep)
As he was whan that Argus took his sleep;
And seyde him thus: 'To Athenes shaltou wende;
Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende.'
And with that word Arcite wook and sterte.
'Now trewely, how sore that me smerte,'
Quod he, 'to Athenes right now wol I fare;
Ne for the drede of deeth shal I nat spare
To see my lady, that I love and serve;
In hir presence I recche nat to sterve.'
And with that word he caughte a greet mirour,
And saugh that chaunged was al his colour,
And saugh his visage al in another kinde.
And right anoon it ran him in his minde,
That, sith his face was so disfigured
Of maladye, the which he hadde endured,
He mighte wel, if that he bar him lowe,
Live in Athenes ever-more unknowe,
And seen his lady wel ny day by day.
And right anon he chaunged his array,
And cladde him as a povre laborer,
And al allone, save oonly a squyer,
That knew his privetee and al his cas,
Which was disgysed povrely, as he was,
To Athenes is he goon the nexte way.
And to the court he wente up-on a day,
And at the gate he profreth his servyse,
To drugge and drawe, what so men wol devyse.
And shortly of this matere for to seyn,
He fil in office with a chamberleyn,
The which that dwelling was with Emelye.
For he was wys, and coude soon aspye
Of every servaunt, which that serveth here.
Wel coude he hewen wode, and water bere,
For he was yong and mighty for the nones,
And ther-to he was strong and big of bones
To doon that any wight can him devyse.
A yeer or two he was in this servyse,
Page of the chambre of Emelye the brighte;
And 'Philostrate' he seide that he highte.
But half so wel biloved a man as he
Ne was ther never in court, of his degree;
He was so gentil of condicioun,
That thurghout al the court was his renoun.
They seyden, that it were a charitee
That Theseus wolde enhauncen his degree,
And putten him in worshipful servyse,
Ther as he mighte his vertu excercyse.
And thus, with-inne a whyle, his name is sprongne
Bothe of his dedes, and his goode tonge,
That Theseus hath taken him so neer
That of his chambre he made him a squyer,
And yaf him gold to mayntene his degree;
And eek men broghte him out of his contree
From yeer to yeer, ful prively, his rente;
But honestly and slyly he it spente,
That no man wondred how that he it hadde.
And three yeer in this wyse his lyf he ladde,
And bar him so in pees and eek in werre,
Ther nas no man that Theseus hath derre.
And in this blisse lete I now Arcite,
And speke I wol of Palamon a lyte.
In derknesse and horrible and strong prisoun
This seven yeer hath seten Palamoun,

Forpyned, what for wo and for distresse;
Who feleth double soor and hevinesse
But Palamon? that love destreyneth so,
That wood out of his wit he gooth for wo;
And eek therto he is a prisoner
Perpetuelly, noght oonly for a yeer.
Who coude ryme in English proprely
His martirdom? for sothe, it am nat I;
Therefore I passe as lightly as I may.
It fel that in the seventhe yeer, in May,
The thridde night, (as olde bokes seyn,
That al this storie tellen more pleyn,)
Were it by aventure or destinee,
(As, whan a thing is shapen, it shal be,)
That, sone after the midnight, Palamoun,
By helping of a freend, brak his prisoun,
And fleeth the citee, faste as he may go;
For he had yive his gayler drinke so
Of a clarree, maad of a certeyn wyn,
With nercotikes and opie of Thebes fyn,
That al that night, thogh that men wolde him shake,
The gayler sleep, he mighte nat awake;
And thus he fleeth as faste as ever he may.
The night was short, and faste by the day,
That nedes-cost he moste him-selven hyde,
And til a grove, faste ther besyde,
With dredful foot than stalketh Palamoun.
For shortly, this was his opinioun,
That in that grove he wolde him hyde al day,
And in the night than wolde he take his way
To Thebes-ward, his freendes for to preye
On Theseus to helpe him to werreye;
And shortly, outher he wolde lese his lyf,
Or winnen Emelye un-to his wyf;
This is theffect and his entente pleyn.
Now wol I torne un-to Arcite ageyn,
That litel wiste how ny that was his care,
Til that fortune had broght him in the snare.
The bisy larke, messager of day,
Saluëth in hir song the morwe gray;
And fyry Phebus ryseth up so brighte,
That al the orient laugheth of the lighte,
And with his stremes dryeth in the greves
The silver dropes, hanging on the leves.
And Arcite, that is in the court royal
With Theseus, his squyer principal,
Is risen, and loketh on the myrie day.
And, for to doon his observaunce to May,
Remembring on the poynt of his desyr,
He on a courser, sterting as the fyr,
Is riden in-to the feeldes, him to pleye,
Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye;
And to the grove, of which that I yow tolde,
By aventure, his wey he gan to holde,
To maken him a gerland of the greves,
Were it of wodebinde or hawethorn-leves,
And loude he song ageyn the sonne shene:
'May, with alle thy floures and thy grene,
Wel-come be thou, faire fresshe May,
I hope that I som grene gete may.'
And from his courser, with a lusty herte,
In-to the grove ful hastily he sterte,
And in a path he rometh up and doun,
Ther-as, by aventure, this Palamoun
Was in a bush, that no man mighte him see,
For sore afered of his deeth was he.
No-thing ne knew he that it was Arcite:
God wot he wolde have trowed it ful lyte.
But sooth is seyd, gon sithen many yeres,
That 'feeld hath eyen, and the wode hath eres.'
It is ful fair a man to bere him evene,
For al-day meteth men at unset stevene.
Ful litel woot Arcite of his felawe,
That was so ny to herknen al his sawe,
For in the bush he sitteth now ful stille.
Whan that Arcite had romed al his fille,
And songen al the roundel lustily,
In-to a studie he fil sodeynly,
As doon thise loveres in hir queynte geres,
Now in the croppe, now doun in the breres,
Now up, now doun, as boket in a welle.
Right as the Friday, soothly for to telle,
Now it shyneth, now it reyneth faste,
Right so can gery Venus overcaste
The hertes of hir folk; right as hir day
Is gerful, right so chaungeth she array.

Selde is the Friday al the wyke y-lyke.
Whan that Arcite had songe, he gan to syke,
And sette him doun with-outen any more:
'Alas!' quod he, 'that day that I was bore!
How longe, Iuno, thurgh thy crueltee,
Woltow werreyen Thebes the citee?
Allas! y-brought is to confusioun
The blood royal of Cadme and Amphioun;
Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man
That Thebes bulte, or first the toun bigan,
And of the citee first was crouned king,
Of his linage am I, and his of-spring
By verray ligne, as of the stok royal:
And now I am so caitif and so thral,
That he, that is my mortal enemy,
I serve him as his squyer povrely.
And yet doth Iuno me wel more shame,
For I dar noght biknowe myn owne name;
But ther-as I was wont to highte Arcite,
Now highte I Philostrate, noght worth a myte.
Allas! thou felle Mars, allas! Iuno,
Thus hath your ire our kinrede al fordo,
Save only me, and wrecched Palamoun,
That Theseus martyreth in prisoun.
And over al this, to sleen me utterly,
Love hath his fyry dart so brenningly
Y-stiked thurgh my trewe careful herte,
That shapen was my deeth erst than my sherte.
Ye sleen me with your eyen, Emelye;
Ye been the cause wherfor that I dye.
Of al the remenant of myn other care
Ne sette I nat the mountaunce of a tare,
So that I coude don aught to your plesaunce!'
And with that word he fil doun in a traunce
A longe tyme; and after he up-sterte.
This Palamoun, that thoughte that thurgh his herte
He felte a cold swerd sodeynliche glyde,
For ire he quook, no lenger wolde he byde.
And whan that he had herd Arcites tale,
As he were wood, with face deed and pale,
He sterte him up out of the buskes thikke,
And seyde: 'Arcite, false traitour wikke,
Now artow hent, that lovest my lady so,
For whom that I have al this peyne and wo,
And art my blood, and to my counseil sworn,
As I ful ofte have told thee heer-biforn,
And hast by-iaped here duk Theseus,
And falsly chaunged hast thy name thus;
I wol be deed, or elles thou shalt dye.
Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye,
But I wol love hir only, and namo;
For I am Palamoun, thy mortal fo.
And though that I no wepne have in this place,
But out of prison am astert by grace,
I drede noght thet outher thou shalt dye,
Or thou ne shalt nat loven Emelye.
Chees which thou wilt, for thou shalt nat asterte.'
This Arcitë, with ful despitous herte
Whan he him knew, and hadde his tale herd,
As fiers as leoun, pulled out a swerd,
And seyde thus: 'by God that sit above,
Nere it that thou art sik, and wood for love.
And eek that thou no wepne hast in this place
Thou sholdest never out of this grove pace,
That thou ne sholdest dyen of myn hond.
For I defye the seurtee and the bond
Which that thou seyst that I have maad to thee.
What, verray fool, think wel that love is free,
And I wol love hir, maugre al thy might!
But, for as muche thou art a worthy knight
And wilnest to darreyne hir by batayle,
Have heer my trouthe, to-morwe I wol nat fayle,
With-outen witing of any other wight,

That here I wol be founden as a knight,
And bringen harneys right y-nough for thee;
And chees the beste, and leve the worste for me.
And mete and drinke this night wol I bringe
Y-nough for thee, and clothes for thy beddinge.
And, if so be that thou my lady winne,
And slee me in this wode ther I am inne,
Thou mayst wel have thy lady, as for me.'
This Palamon answerde: 'I graunte it thee,'
And thus they been departed til a-morwe,
When ech of hem had leyd his feith to borwe.
O cupide, out of alle charitee!
O regne, that wolt no felawe have with thee!
Ful sooth is seyd, that love ne lord-shipe
Wol noght, his thankes, have no felawe-shipe;
Wel finden that Arcite and Palamoun.
Arcite is riden anon un-to the toun,
And on the morwe, er it were dayes light,
Ful prively two harneys hath he dight,
Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
The bataille in the feeld betwix hem tweyne.
And on his hors, allone as he was born,
He carieth al this harneys him biforn;
And in the grove, at tyme and place y-set,
This Arcite and this Palamon ben met.
Tho chaungen gan the colour in hir face;
Right as the hunter in the regne of Trace,
That stondeth at the gappe with a spere,
Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,
And hereth him come russhing in the greves,
And breketh bothe bowes and the leves,
And thinketh, 'heer cometh my mortel enemy,
With-oute faile, he moot be deed, or I;
For outher I mot sleen him at the gappe,
Or he mot sleen me, if that me mis-happe:'
So ferden they, in chaunging of hir hewe,
As fer as everich of hem other knewe.
Ther nas no good day, ne no saluing;
But streight, with-outen word or rehersing,
Everich of hem halp for to armen other,
As freendly as he were his owne brother;
And after that, with sharpe speres stronge
They foynen ech at other wonder longe.
Thou mightest wene that this Palamoun
In his fighting were a wood leoun,
And as a cruel tygre was Arcite:
As wilde bores gonne they to smyte,
That frothen whyte as foom for ire wood.
Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood.
And in this wyse I lete hem fighting dwelle;
And forth I wol of Theseus yow telle.
The destinee, ministre general,
That executeth in the world over-al
The purveyaunce, that God hath seyn biforn,
So strong it is, that, though the world had sworn
The contrarie of a thing, by ye or nay,
Yet somtyme it shal fallen on a day
That falleth nat eft with-inne a thousand yere.
For certeinly, our appetytes here,
Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
Al is this reuled by the sighte above.
This mene I now by mighty Theseus,
That for to honten is so desirous,
And namely at the grete hert in May,
That in his bed ther daweth him no day,
That he nis clad, and redy for to ryde
With hunte and horn, and houndes him bisyde.
For in his hunting hath he swich delyt,
That it is al his Ioye and appetyt
To been him-self the grete hertes bane;
For after Mars he serveth now Diane.
Cleer was the day, as I have told er this,
And Theseus, with alle Ioye and blis,
With his Ipolita, the fayre quene,
And Emelye, clothed al in grene,
On hunting be they riden royally.
And to the grove, that stood ful faste by,

In which ther was an hert, as men him tolde,
Duk Theseus the streighte wey hath holde.
And to the launde he rydeth him ful right,
For thider was the hert wont have his flight,
And over a brook, and so forth on his weye.
This duk wol han a cours at him, or tweye,
With houndes, swiche as that him list comaunde.
And whan this duk was come un-to the launde,
Under the sonne he loketh, and anon
He was war of Arcite and Palamon,
That foughten breme, as it were bores two;
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
So hidously, that with the leeste strook
It seemed as it wolde felle an ook;
But what they were, no-thing he ne woot.
This duk his courser with his spores smoot,
And at a stert he was bitwix hem two,
And pulled out a swerd and cryed, 'ho!
Namore, up peyne of lesing of your heed.
By mighty Mars, he shal anon be deed,
That smyteth any strook, that I may seen!
But telleth me what mister men ye been,
That been so hardy for to fighten here
With-outen Iuge or other officere,
As it were in listes royally?'
This Palamon answerde hastily,
And seyde: 'sire, what nedeth wordes mo?
We have the deeth deserved bothe two.
Two woful wrecches been we, two caytyves,
That been encombred of our owne lyves;
And as thou art a rightful lord and Iuge,
Ne yeve us neither mercy ne refuge,
But slee me first, for seynte charitee;
But slee my felawe eek as wel as me.
Or slee him first; for, though thou knowe it lyte,
This is thy mortal fo, this is Arcite,
That fro thy lond is banished on his heed,
For which he hath deserved to be deed.
For this is he that cam un-to thy gate,
And seyde, that he highte Philostrate.
Thus hath he Iaped thee ful many a yeer,
And thou has maked him thy chief squyer;
And this is he that loveth Emelye.
For sith the day is come that I shal dye,
I make pleynly my confessioun,
That I am thilke woful Palamoun,
That hath thy prison broken wikkedly.
I am thy mortal fo, and it am I
That loveth so hote Emelye the brighte,
That I wol dye present in hir sighte.
Therfore I axe deeth and my Iuwyse;
But slee my felawe in the same wyse,
For bothe han we deserved to be slayn.'
This worthy duk answerde anon agayn,
And seyde, 'This is a short conclusioun:
Youre owne mouth, by your confessioun,
Hath dampned you, and I wol it recorde,
It nedeth noght to pyne yow with the corde.
Ye shul be deed, by mighty Mars the rede!'
The quene anon, for verray wommanhede
Gan for to wepe, and so dide Emelye,
And alle the ladies in the companye.
Gret pitee was it, as it thoughte hem alle,
That ever swich a chaunce sholde falle;
For gentil men they were, of greet estat,
And no-thing but for love was this debat;
And sawe hir blody woundes wyde and sore
And alle cryden, bothe lasse and more,
'Have mercy, lord, up-on us wommen alle!'
And on hir bare knees adoun they falle,
And wolde have kist his feet ther-as he stood,
Til at the laste aslaked was his mood;
For pitee renneth sone in gentil herte.
And though he first for ire quook and sterte,
He hath considered shortly, in a clause,
The trespas of hem bothe, and eek the cause:
And al-though that his ire hir gilt accused,
Yet in his reson he hem bothe excused;

As thus: he thoghte wel, that every man
Wol helpe him-self in love, if that he can,
And eek delivere him-self out of prisoun;
And eek his herte had compassioun
Of wommen, for they wepen ever in oon;
And in his gentil herte he thoghte anoon,
And softe un-to himself he seyde: 'fy
Up-on a lord that wol have no mercy,
But been a leoun, bothe in word and dede,
To hem that been in repentaunce and drede
As wel as to a proud despitous man
That wol maynteyne that he first bigan!
That lord hath litel of discrecioun,
That in swich cas can no divisioun,
But weyeth pryde and humblesse after oon.'
And shortly, whan his ire is thus agoon,
He gan to loken up with eyen lighte,
And spak thise same wordes al on highte:—
'The god of love, a! *benedicite*,
How mighty and how greet a lord is he!
Ayeins his might ther gayneth none obstacles,
He may be cleped a god for his miracles;
For he can maken at his owne gyse
Of everich herte, as that him list devyse.
Lo heer, this Arcite and this Palamoun,
That quitly weren out of my prisoun,
And mighte han lived in Thebes royally,
And witen I am his mortal enemy,
And that hir deeth lyth in my might also,
And yet hath love, maugree hir eyen two,
Y-broght hem hider bothe for to dye!
Now loketh, is nat that an heigh folye?
Who may been a fool, but-if he love?
Bihold, for Goddes sake that sit above,
Se how they blede! be they noght wel arrayed?
Thus hath hir lord, the god of love, y-payed
Hir wages and hir fees for hir servyse!
And yet they wenen for to been ful wyse
That serven love, for aught that may bifalle!
But this is yet the beste game of alle,
That she, for whom they han this Iolitee,
Can hem ther-for as muche thank as me;
She woot namore of al this hote fare,
By God, than woot a cokkow or an hare!
But al mot been assayed, hoot and cold;
A man mot been a fool, or yong or old;
I woot it by my-self ful yore agoon:
For in my tyme a servant was I oon.
And therfore, sin I knowe of loves peyne,
And woot how sore it can a man destreyne,
As he that hath ben caught ofte in his las,
I yow foryeve al hoolly this trespas,
At requeste of the quene that kneleth here,
And eek of Emelye, my suster dere.
And ye shul bothe anon un-to me swere,
That never-mo ye shul my contree dere,
Ne make werre up-on me night ne day,
But been my freendes in al that ye may;
I yow foryeve this trespas every del.'
And they him swore his axing fayre and wel,
And him of lordshipe and of mercy preyde,
And he hem graunteth grace, and thus he seyde:
'To speke of royal linage and richesse,
Though that she were a quene or a princesse,
Ech of yow bothe is worthy, doutelees,
To wedden whan tyme is, but nathelees
I speke as for my suster Emelye,
For whom ye have this stryf and Ielousye;
Ye woot your-self, she may not wedden two
At ones, though ye fighten ever-mo:
That oon of yow, al be him looth or leef,
He moot go pypen in an ivy-leef;
This is to seyn, she may nat now han bothe,
Al be ye never so Ielous, ne so wrothe.
And for-thy I yow putte in this degree,
That ech of yow shal have his destinee
As him is shape; and herkneth in what wyse;
Lo, heer your ende of that I shal devyse.
My wil is this, for plat conclusioun,
With-outen any replicacioun,
If that yow lyketh, tak it for the beste,
That everich of yow shal gon wher him leste
Frely, with-outen raunson or daunger;

And this day fifty wykes, fer ne ner,
Everich of yow shal bringe an hundred knightes,
Armed for listes up at alle rightes,
Al redy to darreyne hir by bataille.
And this bihote I yow, with-outen faille,
Up-on my trouthe, and as I am a knight,
That whether of yow bothe that hath might,
This is to seyn, that whether he or thou
May with his hundred, as I spak of now,
Sleen his contrarie, or out of listes dryve,
Him shal I yeve Emelya to wyve,
To whom that fortune yeveth so fair a grace.
The listes shal I maken in this place,
And God so wisly on my soule rewe,
As I shal even Iuge been and trewe.
Ye shul non other ende with me maken,
That oon of yow ne shal be deed or taken.
And if yow thinketh this is wel y-sayd,
Seyeth your avys, and holdeth yow apayd.
This is your ende and your conclusioun.'
Who loketh lightly now but Palamoun?
Who springeth up for Ioye but Arcite?
Who couthe telle, or who couthe it endyte,
The Ioye that is maked in the place
Whan Theseus hath doon so fair a grace?
But doun on knees wente every maner wight,
And thanked him with al her herte and might,
And namely the Thebans ofte sythe.
And thus with good hope and with herte blythe
They take hir leve, and hom-ward gonne they ryde
To Thebes, with his olde walles wyde.

Explicit secunda pars. Sequitur pars tercia.

I trowe men wolde deme it necligence,
If I foryete to tellen the dispence
Of Theseus, that goth so busily
To maken up the listes royally;
That swich a noble theatre as it was,
I dar wel seyn that in this world ther nas.
The circuit a myle was aboute,
Walled of stoon, and diched al without.
Round was the shap, in maner of compas,
Ful of degrees, the heighte of sixty pas,
That, whan a man was set on o degree,
He letted nat his felawe for to see.
Est-ward ther stood a gate of marbel whyt,
West-ward, right swich another in the opposit.
And shortly to concluden, swich a place
Was noon in erthe, as in so litel space;
For in the lond ther nas no crafty man,
That geometrie or ars-metrik can,
Ne purtreyour, ne kerver of images,
That Theseus ne yaf him mete and wages
The theatre for to maken and devyse.
And for to doon his ryte and sacrifyse,
He est-ward hath, up-on the gate above,
In worship of Venus, goddesse of love,
Don make an auter and an oratorie;
And west-ward, in the minde and in memorie
Of Mars, he maked hath right swich another,
That coste largely of gold a fother.
And north-ward, in a touret on the wal,
Of alabastre whyt and reed coral
An oratorie riche for to see,
In worship of Dyane of chastitee,
Hath Theseus don wroght in noble wyse.
But yet hadde I foryeten to devyse
The noble kerving, and the portreitures,
The shap, the countenaunce, and the figures,
That weren in thise oratories three.
First in the temple of Venus maystow see
Wroght on the wal, ful pitous to biholde,
The broken slepes, and the sykes colde;
The sacred teres, and the waymenting;
The fyry strokes of the desiring,
That loves servaunts in this lyf enduren;
The othes, that hir covenants assuren;
Plesaunce and hope, desyr, fool-hardinesse,
Beautee and youthe, bauderie, richesse,
Charmes and force, lesinges, flaterye,
Dispense, bisynesse, and Ielousye,
That wered of yelwe goldes a gerland,
And a cokkow sitting on hir hand;
Festes, instruments, caroles, daunces,

Lust and array, and alle the circumstaunces
Of love, whiche that I rekne and rekne shal,
By ordre weren peynted on the wal, 1934
And mo than I can make of mencioun.
For soothly, al the mount of Citheroun,
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwelling,
Was shewed on the wal in portreying,
With al the gardin, and the lustinesse.
Nat was foryeten the porter Ydelnesse,
Ne Narcisus the faire of yore agon, 1941
Ne yet the folye of king Salamon,
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Hercules—
Thenchauntements of Medea and Circes—
Ne of Turnus, with the hardy fiers corage,
The riche Cresus, caytif in servage. 1946
Thus may ye seen that wisdom ne richesse,
Beautee ne sleighte, strengthe, ne hardinesse,
Ne may with Venus holde champartye;
For as hir list the world than may she gye. 1950
Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir las,
Til they for wo ful ofte seyde 'allas!'
Suffyceth heer ensamples oon or two,
And though I coude rekne a thousand mo.
The statue of Venus, glorious for to see, 1955
Was naked fleting in the large see,
And fro the navele doun all covered was
With wawes grene, and brighte as any glas.
A citole in hir right hand hadde she, 1959
And on hir heed, ful semely for to see,
A rose gerland, fresh and wel smellinge;
Above hir heed hir dowves flikeringe.
Biforn hir stood hir sone Cupido,
Up-on his shuldres winges hadde he two;
And blind he was, as it is ofte sene;
A bowe he bar and arwes brighte and kene. 1966
Why sholde I noght as wel eek telle yow al
The portreiture, that was up-on the wal
Within the temple of mighty Mars the rede?
Al peynted was the wal, in lengthe and brede, 1970
Lyk to the estres of the grisly place,
That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace,
In thilke colde frosty regioun,
Ther-as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.
First on the wal was peynted a foreste,
In which ther dwelleth neither man ne beste, 1976
With knotty knarry bareyn treës olde
Of stubbes sharpe and hidous to biholde;
In which ther ran a rumbel and a swough,
As though a storm sholde bresten every bough: 1980
And downward from an hille, under a bente,
Ther stood the temple of Mars armipotente,
Wroght al of burned steel, of which thentree
Was long and streit, and gastly for to see.
And ther-out cam a rage and such a vese, 1985
That it made al the gates for to rese.
The northren light in at the dores shoon,
For windowe on the wal ne was ther noon,
Thurgh which men mighten any light discerne.
The dores were alle of adamant eterne,
Y-clenched overthwart and endelong 1991
With iren tough; and, for to make it strong,
Every piler, the temple to sustene,
Was tonne-greet, of iren bright and shene.
Ther saugh I first the derke imagining 1995
Of felonye, and al the compassing;
The cruel ire, reed as any glede;
The pykepurs, and eek the pale drede;
The smyler with the knyf under the cloke;
The shepne brenning with the blake smoke; 2000
The treson of the mordring in the bedde;
The open werre, with woundes al bibledde;
Contek, with blody knyf and sharp manace;
Al ful of chirking was that sory place.
The sleere of him-self yet saugh I ther,
His herte-blood hath bathed al his heer; 2006
The nayl y-driven in the shode a-night;

The colde deeth, with mouth gaping upright.
Amiddes of the temple sat meschaunce,
With disconfort and sory contenaunce.
Yet saugh I woodnesse laughing in his rage;
Armed compleint, out-hees, and fiers outrage.
The careyne in the bush, with throte y-corve:
A thousand slayn, and nat of qualm y-storve;
The tiraunt, with the prey by force y-raft;
The toun destroyed, ther was no-thing laft.
Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppesteres;
The hunte strangled with the wilde beres:
The sowe freten the child right in the cradel;
The cook y-scalded, for al his longe ladel.
Noght was foryeten by the infortune of Marte;
The carter over-riden with his carte,
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.
Ther were also, of Martes divisioun,
The barbour, and the bocher, and the smith
That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his stith.
And al above, depeynted in a tour,
Saw I conquest sittinge in greet honour,
With the sharpe swerde over his heed
Hanginge by a sotil twynes threed.
Depeynted was the slaughtre of Iulius,
Of grete Nero, and of Antonius;
Al be that thilke tyme they were unborn,
Yet was hir deeth depeynted ther-biforn,
By manasinge of Mars, right by figure;
So was it shewed in that portreiture
As is depeynted in the sterres above,
Who shal be slayn or elles deed for love.
Suffyceth oon ensample in stories olde,
I may not rekne hem alle, thogh I wolde.

The statue of Mars up-on a carte stood,
Armed, and loked grim as he were wood;
And over his heed ther shynen two figures
Of sterres, that ben cleped in scriptures,
That oon Puella, that other Rubeus.
This god of armes was arrayed thus:—
A wolf ther stood biforn him at his feet
With eyen rede, and of a man he eet;
With sotil pencel was depeynt this storie,
In redoutinge of Mars and of his glorie.

Now to the temple of Diane the chaste
As shortly as I can I wol me haste,
To telle yow al the descripcioun.
Depeynted been the walles up and doun
Of hunting and of shamfast chastitee.
Ther saugh I how woful Calistopee,
Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
Was turned from a womman til a bere,
And after was she maad the lode-sterre;
Thus was it peynt, I can say yow no ferre;
Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may see.
Ther saugh I Dane, y-turned til a tree,
I mene nat the goddesse Diane,
But Penneus doughter, which that highte Dane.
Ther saugh I Attheon an hert y-maked,
For vengeaunce that he saugh Diane al naked;
I saugh how that his houndes have him caught,
And freten him, for that they knewe him naught.
Yet peynted was a litel forther-moor,
How Atthalante hunted the wilde boor,
And Meleagre, and many another mo,
For which Diane wroghte him care and wo.
Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,
The whiche me list nat drawen to memorie.
This goddesse on an hert ful hye seet,
With smale houndes al aboute hir feet;
And undernethe hir feet she hadde a mone,
Wexing it was, and sholde wanie sone.
In gaude grene hir statue clothed was,
With bowe in honde, and arwes in a cas.
Hir eyen caste she ful lowe adoun,
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.
A womman travailinge was hir biforn,
But, for hir child so longe was unborn,
Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle,
And seyde, 'help, for thou mayst best of alle.'

Wel couthe he peynten lyfly that it wroghte,
With many a florin he the hewes boghte.
Now been thise listes maad, and Theseus,
That at his grete cost arrayed thus
The temples and the theatre every del,
Whan it was doon, him lyked wonder wel.
But stinte I wol of Theseus a lyte,
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
The day approcheth of hir retourninge,
That everich sholde an hundred knightes bringe,
The bataille to darreyne, as I yow tolde;
And til Athenes, hir covenant for to holde,
Hath everich of hem broght an hundred knightes
Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes.
And sikerly, ther trowed many a man
That never, sithen that the world bigan,
As for to speke of knighthod of hir hond,
As fer as God hath maked see or lond,
Nas, of so fewe, so noble a companye.
For every wight that lovede chivalrye,
And wolde, his thankes, han a passant name,
Hath preyed that he mighte ben of that game;
And wel was him, that ther-to chosen was.
For if ther fille to-morwe swich a cas,
Ye knowen wel, that every lusty knight,
That loveth paramours, and hath his might,
Were it in Engelond, or elles-where,
They wolde, hir thankes, wilnen to be there.
To fighte for a lady, *benedicite!*
It were a lusty sighte for to see.
And right so ferden they with Palamon.
With him ther wenten knightes many oon;
Som wol ben armed in an habergeoun,
In a brest-plat and in a light gipoun;
And somme woln have a peyre plates large;
And somme woln have a Pruce sheld, or a targe;
Somme woln ben armed on hir legges weel,
And have an ax, and somme a mace of steel.
Ther nis no newe gyse, that it nas old.
Armed were they, as I have you told,
Everich after his opinioun.
Ther maistow seen coming with Palamoun
Ligurge him-self, the grete king of Trace;
Blak was his berd, and manly was his face.
The cercles of his eyen in his heed,
They gloweden bitwixe yelow and reed;
And lyk a griffon loked he aboute,
With kempe heres on his browes stoute;
His limes grete, his braunes harde and stronge,
His shuldres brode, his armes rounde and longe.
And as the gyse was in his contree,
Ful hye up-on a char of gold stood he,
With foure whyte boles in the trays.
In-stede of cote-armure over his harnays,
With nayles yelwe and brighte as any gold,
He hadde a beres skin, col-blak, for-old.
His longe heer was kembd bihinde his bak,
As any ravenes fether it shoon for-blak:
A wrethe of gold arm-greet, of huge wighte,
Upon his heed, set ful of stones brighte,
Of fyne rubies and of dyamaunts.
Aboute his char ther wenten whyte alaunts,
Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,
To hunten at the leoun or the deer,
And folwed him, with mosel faste y-bounde,
Colers of gold, and torets fyled rounde.
An hundred lordes hadde he in his route
Armed ful wel, with hertes sterne and stoute.
With Arcita, in stories as men finde,
The grete Emetreus, the king of Inde,
Up-on a stede bay, trapped in steel,
Covered in cloth of gold diapred weel
Cam ryding lyk the god of armes, Mars.
His cote-armure was of cloth of Tars,

Couched with perles whyte and rounde and grete.
His sadel was of brend gold newe y-bete;
A mantelet upon his shuldre hanginge
Bret-ful of rubies rede, as fyr sparklinge.
His crispe heer lyk ringes was y-ronne,
And that was yelow, and glitered as the sonne.
His nose was heigh, his eyen bright citryn,
His lippes rounde, his colour was sangwyn,
A fewe fraknes in his face y-spreynd,
Betwixen yelow and somdel blak y-meynd,
And as a leoun he his loking caste.
Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I caste.
His berd was wel bigonne for to sprynge;
His voys was as a trompe thunderinge.
Up-on his heed he wered of laurer grene
A gerland fresh and lusty for to sene.
Up-on his hand he bar, for his deduyt,
An egle tame, as eny lilie whyt.
An hundred lordes hadde he with him there,
Al armed, sauf hir heddes, in al hir gere,
Ful richely in alle maner thinges.
For trusteth wel, that dukes, erles, kinges,
Were gadered in this noble companye,
For love and for encrees of chivalrye.
Aboute this king ther ran on every part
Ful many a tame leoun and lepart.
And in this wyse thise lordes, alle and some,
Ben on the Sonday to the citee come
Aboute pryme, and in the toun alight.
This Theseus, this duk, this worthy knight,
Whan he had broght hem in-to his citee,
And inned hem, everich in his degree,
He festeth hem, and dooth so greet labour
To esen hem, and doon hem al honour,
That yet men weneth that no mannes wit
Of noon estat ne coude amenden it.
The minstralcye, the service at the feste,
The grete yiftes to the moste and leste,
The riche array of Theseus paleys,
Ne who sat first ne last up-on the deys,
What ladies fairest been or best daunsinge,
Or which of hem can dauncen best and singe,
Ne who most felingly speketh of love:
What haukes sitten on the perche above,
What houndes liggen on the floor adoun:
Of al this make I now no mencioun;
But al theffect, that thinketh me the beste;
Now comth the poynt, and herkneth if yow leste.
The Sonday night, er day bigan to springe,
When Palamon the larke herde singe,
Although it nere nat day by houres two,
Yet song the larke, and Palamon also.
With holy herte, and with an heigh corage
He roos, to wenden on his pilgrimage
Un-to the blisful Citherea benigne,
I mene Venus, honurable and digne.
And in hir houre he walketh forth a pas
Un-to the listes, ther hir temple was,
And doun he kneleth, and with humble chere
And herte soor, he seyde as ye shul here.
'Faireste of faire, o lady myn, Venus,
Doughter to Iove and spouse of Vulcanus,
Thou glader of the mount of Citheroun,
For thilke love thou haddest to Adoun,
Have pitee of my bittre teres smerte,
And tak myn humble preyer at thyn herte.
Allas! I ne have no langage to telle
Theffectes ne the torments of myn helle;
Myn herte may myne harmes nat biwreye;
I am so confus, that I can noght seye.
But mercy, lady bright, that knowest weel
My thought, and seest what harmes that I feel,
Considere al this, and rewe up-on my sore,
As wisly as I shal for evermore,

Emforth my might, thy trewe servant be,
And holden werre alwey with chastitee;
That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe.
I kepe noght of armes for to yelpe,
Ne I ne axe nat to-morwe to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this cas, ne veyne glorie
Of pris of armes blowen up and doun,
But I wolde have fully possessioun
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse;
Find thou the maner how, and in what wyse.
I recche nat, but it may bettre be,
To have victorie of hem, or they of me,
So that I have my lady in myne armes.
For though so be that Mars is god of armes
Your vertu is so greet in hevene above,
That, if yow list, I shal wel have my love.
Thy temple wol I worshipe evermo,
And on thyn auter, wher I ryde or go,
I wol don sacrifice, and fyres bete.
And if ye wol nat so, my lady swete,
Than preye I thee, to-morwe with a spere
That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere.
Thanne rekke I noght, whan I have lost my lyf,
Though that Arcita winne hir to his wyf.
This is theffect and ende of my preyere,
Yif me my love, thou blisful lady dere.'
Whan thorisoun was doon of Palamon,
His sacrifice he dide, and that anon
Ful pitously, with alle circumstaunces,
Al telle I noght as now his observaunces.
But atte laste the statue of Venus shook,
And made a signe, wher-by that he took
That his preyere accepted was that day.
For thogh the signe shewed a delay,
Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his bone;
And with glad herte he wente him hoom ful sone.
The thridde houre inequal that Palamoun
Bigan to Venus temple for to goon,
Up roos the sonne, and up roos Emelye,
And to the temple of Diane gan hye.
Hir maydens, that she thider with hir ladde,
Ful redily with hem the fyr they hadde,
Thencens, the clothes, and the remenant al
That to the sacrifyce longen shal;
The hornes fulle of meth, as was the gyse;
Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrifyse.
Smoking the temple, ful of clothes faire,
This Emelye, with herte debonaire,
Hir body wessh with water of a welle;
But how she dide hir ryte I dar nat telle,
But it be any thing in general;
And yet it were a game to heren al;
To him that meneth wel, it were no charge:
But it is good a man ben at his large.
Hir brighte heer was kempt, untressed al;
A coroune of a grene ook cerial
Up-on hir heed was set ful fair and mete.
Two fyres on the auter gan she bete,
And dide hir thinges, as men may biholde
In Stace of Thebes, and thise bokes olde.
Whan kindled was the fyr, with pitous chere
Un-to Diane she spak, as ye may here.
'O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene,
To whom bothe hevene and erthe and see is sene,
Quene of the regne of Pluto derk and lowe,
Goddesse of maydens, that myn herte hast knowe
Ful many a yeer, and woost what I desire,
As keep me fro thy vengeaunce and thyn ire,
That Attheon aboughte cruelly.
Chaste goddesse, wel wostow that I
Desire to been a mayden al my lyf,
Ne never wol I be no love ne wyf.
I am, thou woost, yet of thy companye,
A mayde, and love hunting and venerye,
And for to walken in the wodes wilde,
And noght to been a wyf, and be with childe.
Noght wol I knowe companye of man.
Now help me, lady, sith ye may and can,
For tho thre formes that thou hast in thee.
And Palamon, that hath swich love to me,
And eek Arcite, that loveth me so sore,
This grace I preye thee with-oute more,
As sende love and pees bitwixe hem two;
And fro me turne awey hir hertes so,

That al hir hote love, and hir desyr,
And al hir bisy torment, and hir fyr
Be queynt, or turned in another place;
And if so be thou wolt not do me grace,
Or if my destinee be shapen so,
That I shal nedes have oon of hem two,
As sende me him that most desireth me.
Bihold, goddesse of clene chastitee,
The bittre teres that on my chekes falle.
Sin thou are mayde, and keper of us alle,
My maydenhede thou kepe and wel conserve,
And whyl I live a mayde, I wol thee serve.'
The fyres brenne up-on the auter clere,
Whyl Emelye was thus in hir preyere;
But sodeinly she saugh a sighte queynte,
For right anon oon of the fyres queynte,
And quiked agayn, and after that anon
That other fyr was queynt, and al agon;
And as it queynte, it made a whistelinge,
As doon thise wete brondes in hir brenninge,
And at the brondes ende out-ran anoon
As it were blody dropes many oon;
For which so sore agast was Emelye,
That she was wel ny mad, and gan to crye,
For she ne wiste what it signifyed;
But only for the fere thus hath she cryed,
And weep, that it was pitee for to here.
And ther-with-al Diane gan appere,
With bowe in hond, right as an hunteresse,
And seyde: 'Doghter, stint thyn hevinesse.
Among the goddes hye it is affermed,
And by eterne word write and confermed,
Thou shalt ben wedded un-to oon of tho
That han for thee so muchel care and wo;
But un-to which of hem I may nat telle.
Farwel, for I ne may no lenger dwelle.
The fyres which that on myn auter brenne
Shul thee declaren, er that thou go henne
Thyn aventure of love, as in this cas.'
And with that word, the arwes in the cas
Of the goddesse clateren faste and ringe.
And forth she wente, and made a vanisshinge;
For which this Emelye astoned was,
And seyde, 'What amounteth this, allas!
I putte me in thy protecciouN,
Diane, and in thy dispositioun.'
And hoom she gooth anon the nexte weye.
This is theffect, ther is namore to seye.
The nexte houre of Mars folwinge this
Arcite un-to the temple walked is
Of fierse Mars, to doon his sacrifyse,
With alle the rytes of his payen wyse.
With pitous herte and heigh devocioun,
Right thus to Mars he seyde his orisoun:
'O stronge god, that in the regnes colde
Of Trace honoured art, and lord y-holde,
And hast in every regne and every lond
Of armes al the brydel in thyn hond,
And hem fortunest as thee list devyse,
Accept of me my pitous sacrifyse.
If so be that my youthe may deserve,
And that my might be worthy for to serve
Thy godhede, that I may been oon of thyne,
Than preye I thee to rewe up-on my pyne.
For thilke peyne, and thilke hote fyr,
In which thou whylom brendest for desyr,
Whan that thou usedest the grete beautee
Of fayre yonge fresshe Venus free,
And haddest hir in armes at thy wille,
Al-though thee ones on a tyme misfille
Whan Vulcanus had caught thee in his las,
And fond thee ligging by his wyf, allas!
For thilke sorwe that was in thyn herte,
Have routhe as wel up-on my peynes smerte.
I am yong and unkonning, as thou wost,
And, as I trowe, with love offended most,

That ever was any lyves creature;
For she, that dooth me al this wo endure,
Ne reccheth never wher I sinke or flete.
And wel I woot, er she me mercy hete,
I moot with strengthe winne hir in the place;
And wel I woot, withouten help or grace
Of thee, ne may my strengthe noght availle.
Than help me, lord, to-morwe in my bataille,
For thilke fyr that whylom brente thee,
As wel as thilke fyr now brenneth me;
And do that I to-morwe have victorie.
Myn be the travaille, and thyn be the glorie!
Thy soverein temple wol I most honouren
Of any place, and alwey most labouren
In thy plesaunce and in thy craftes stronge,
And in thy temple I wol my baner honge,
And alle the armes of my companye;
And evere-mo, un-to that day I dye,
Eterne fyr I wol biforn thee finde.
And eek to this avow I wol me binde:
My berd, myn heer that hongeth long adoun,
That never yet ne felte offensioun
Of rasour nor of shere, I wol thee yive,
And ben thy trewe servant whyl I live.
Now lord, have routhe up-on my sorwes sore,
Yif me victorie, I aske thee namore.'
The preyere stinte of Arcita the stronge,
The ringes on the temple-dore that honge,
And eek the dores, clatereden ful faste,
Of which Arcita som-what him agaste.
The fyres brende up-on the auter brighte,
That it gan al the temple for to lighte;
And swete smel the ground anon up-yaf,
And Arcita anon his hand up-haf,
And more encens in-to the fyr he caste,
With othere rytes mo; and atte laste
The statue of Mars bigan his hauberk ringe.
And with that soun he herde a murmuringe
Ful lowe and dim, that sayde thus, 'Victorie':
For which he yaf to Mars honour and glorie.
And thus with Ioye, and hope wel to fare,
Arcite anon un-to his inne is fare,
As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne.
And right anon swich stryf ther is bigonne
For thilke graunting, in the hevene above,
Bitwixe Venus, the goddesse of love,
And Mars, the sterne god armipotente,
That Iupiter was bisy it to stente;
Til that the pale Saturnus the colde,
That knew so manye of aventures olde,
Fond in his olde experience an art,
That he ful sone hath plesed every part.
As sooth is sayd, elde hath greet avantage;
In elde is bothe wisdom and usage;
Men may the olde at-renne, and noght atrede.
Saturne anon, to stinten stryf and drede,
Al be it that it is agayn his kynde,
Of al this stryf he gan remedie fynde.
'My dere doghter Venus,' quod Saturne,
'My cours, that hath so wyde for to turne,
Hath more power than wot any man.
Myn is the drenching in the see so wan;
Myn is the prison in the derke cote;
Myn is the strangling and hanging by the throte;
The murmure, and the cherles rebelling,
The groyning, and the pryvee empoysoning:
I do vengeance and pleyn correccioun
Whyl I dwelle in the signe of the leoun.
Myn is the ruine of the hye halles,
The falling of the toures and of the walles
Up-on the mynour or the carpenter.
I slow Sampsoun in shaking the piler;
And myne be the maladyes colde,
The derke tresons, and the castes olde;
My loking is the fader of pestilence.
Now weep namore, I shal doon diligence
That Palamon, that is thyn owne knight,
Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.
Though Mars shal helpe his knight, yet nathelees
Bitwixe yow ther moot be som tyme pees,
Al be ye noght of o complexioun,
That causeth al day swich divisioun.
I am thin ayel, redy at thy wille;

Weep thou namore, I wol thy lust fulfille.'
Now wol I stinten of the goddes above,
Of Mars, and of Venus, goddesse of love,
And telle yow, as pleynly as I can,
The grete effect, for which that I bigan.

Explicit tercia pars. Sequitur pars quarta.

Greet was the feste in Athenes that day,
And eek the lusty seson of that May
Made every wight to been in swich plesaunce,
That al that Monday Iusten they and daunce,
And spenden it in Venus heigh servyse.
But by the cause that they sholde ryse
Erly, for to seen the grete fight,
Unto hir reste wente they at night.
And on the morwe, whan that day gan springe,
Of hors and harneys, noyse and clateringe
Ther was in hostelryes al aboute;
And to the paleys rood ther many a route
Of lordes, up-on stedes and palfreys.
Ther maystow seen devysing of herneys
So uncouth and so riche, and wroght so weel
Of goldsmithrie, of browding, and of steel;
The sheeldes brighte, testers, and trappures;
Gold-hewen helmes, hauberks, cote-armures;
Lordes in paraments on hir courseres,
Knightes of retenue, and eek squyeres
Nailinge the speres, and helmes bokelinge,
Gigginge of sheeldes, with layneres lacinge;
Ther as need is, they weren no-thing ydel;
The fomy stedes on the golden brydel
Gnawinge, and faste the armurers also
With fyle and hamer prikinge to and fro;
Yemen on fote, and communes many oon
With shorte staves, thikke as they may goon;
Pypes, trompes, nakers, clariounes,
That in the bataille blowen blody sounes;
The paleys ful of peples up and doun,
Heer three, ther ten, holding hir questioun,
Divyninge of thise Thebane knightes two.
Somme seyden thus, somme seyde it shal be so;
Somme helden with him with the blake berd,
Somme with the balled, somme with the thikke-herd;
Somme sayde, he loked grim and he wolde fighte;
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of wighte.
Thus was the halle ful of divyninge,
Longe after that the sonne gan to springe.
The grete Theseus, that of his sleep awaked
With minstralcye and noyse that was maked,
Held yet the chambre of his paleys riche,
Til that the Thebane knightes, bothe y-liche
Honoured, were into the paleys fet.
Duk Theseus was at a window set,
Arrayed right as he were a god in trone.
The peple preesseth thider-ward ful sone
Him for to seen, and doon heigh reverence,
And eek to herkne his hest and his sentence.
An heraud on a scaffold made an ho,
Til al the noyse of the peple was y-do;
And whan he saugh the peple of noyse al stille,
Tho showed he the mighty dukes wille.
'The lord hath of his heigh discrecioun
Considered, that it were destruccioun
To gentil blood, to fighten in the gyse
Of mortal bataille now in this empryse;
Wherfore, to shapen that they shul not dye,
He wol his firste purpos modifye.
No man therfor, up peyne of los of lyf,
No maner shot, ne polax, ne short knyf
Into the listes sende, or thider bringe;
Ne short swerd for to stoke, with poynt bytinge,
No man ne drawe, ne bere it by his syde.
Ne no man shall un-to his felawe ryde

But o cours, with a sharp y-grounde spere;
Foyne, if him list, on fote, him-self to were.
And he that is at meschief, shal be take,
And nóght slayn, but be broght un-to the stake
That shal ben ordeyned on either syde;
But thider he shal by force, and ther abyde.
And if so falle, the chieftayn be take
On either syde, or elles slee his make.
No lenger shall the turneyinge laste.
God spede yow; goth forth, and ley on faste.
With long swerd and with maces fight your fille.
Goth now your wey; this is the lordes wille.'
The voys of peple touchede the hevene,
So loude cryden they with mery stevene:
'God save swich a lord, that is so good,
He wilneth no destruccioun of blood!'
Up goon the trompes and the melodye.
And to the listes rit the companye
By ordinaunce, thurgh-out the citee large,
Hanged with cloth of gold, and nat with sarge.
Ful lyk a lord this noble duk gan ryde,
Thise two Thebanes up-on either syde;
And after rood the quene, and Emelye,
And after that another companye
Of oon and other, after hir degree.
And thus they passen thurgh-out the citee,
And to the listes come they by tyme.
It nas not of the day yet fully pryme,
Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hye,
Ipolita the quene and Emelye,
And other ladies in degrees aboute.
Un-to the seetes preesseth al the route.
And west-ward, thurgh the gates under Marte,
Arcite, and eek the hundred of his parte,
With baner reed is entred right anon;
And in that selve moment Palamon
Is under Venus, est-ward in the place,
With baner whyt, and hardy chere and face.
In al the world, to seken up and doun,
So even with-outen variacioun,
Ther nere swiche companyes tweye.
For ther nas noon so wys that coude seye,
That any hadde of other avauntage
Of worthinesse, ne of estaat, ne age,
So even were they chosen, for to gesse.
And in two renges faire they hem dresse.
Whan that hir names rad were everichoon,
That in hir nombre gyle were ther noon,
Tho were the gates shet, and cryed was loude:
'Do now your devoir, yonge knightes proude!'
The heraudes lefte hir priking up and doun;
Now ringen trompes loude and clarioun;
Ther is namore to seyn, but west and est
In goon the speres ful sadly in arest;
In goth the sharpe spore in-to the syde.
Ther seen men who can Iuste, and who can ryde;
Ther shiveren shaftes up-on sheeldes thikke;
He feleth thurgh the herte-spoon the prikke.
Up springen speres twenty foot on highte;
Out goon the swerdes as the silver brighte.
The helmes they to-hewen and to-shrede;
Out brest the blood, with sterne stremes rede.
With mighty maces the bones they to-breste.
He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng gan threste.
Ther stomblen stedes stronge, and doun goth al.
He rolleth under foot as dooth a bal.
He foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun,
And he him hurtleth with his hors adoun.
He thurgh the body is hurt, and sithen y-take,
Maugree his heed, and broght un-to the stake,
As forward was, right ther he moste abyde;

Another lad is on that other syde.
And som tyme dooth hem Theseus to reste,
Hem to refresshe, and drinken if hem leste.
Ful ofte a-day han thise Thebanes two
Togidre y-met, and wroght his felawe wo;
Unhorsed hath ech other of hem tweye.
Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Galgopheye,
Whan that hir whelp is stole, whan it is lyte,
So cruel on the hunte, as is Arcite
For Ielous herte upon this Palamoun:
Ne in Belmarye ther nis so fel leoun,
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his praye desireth so the blood,
As Palamon to sleen his fo Arcite.
The Ielous strokes on hir helmes byte;
Out renneth blood on bothe hir sydes rede.
Som tyme an ende ther is of every dede;
For er the sonne un-to the reste wente,
The stronge king Emetreus gan hente
This Palamon, as he faught with Arcite,
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to byte;
And by the force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and y-drawe unto the stake.
And in the rescous of this Palamoun
The stronge king Ligurge is born adoun;
And king Emetreus, for al his strengthe,
Is born out of his sadel a swerdes lengthe,
So hitte him Palamon er he were take;
But al for noght, he was broght to the stake.
His hardy herte mighte him helpe naught;
He moste abyde, whan that he was caught
By force, and eek by composicioun.
Who sorweth now but woful Palamoun,
That moot namore goon agayn to fighte?
And whan that Theseus had seyn this sighte,
Un-to the folk that foghten thus echoon
He cryde, 'Ho! namore, for it is doon!
I wol be trewe Iuge, and no partye.
Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelye,
That by his fortune hath hir faire y-wonne.'
Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne
For Ioye of this, so loude and heigh with-alle,
It semed that the listes sholde falle.
What can now faire Venus doon above?
What seith she now? what dooth this quene of love?
But wepeth so, for wanting of hir wille,
Til that hir teres in the listes fille;
She seyde: 'I am ashamed, doutelees.'
Saturnus seyde: 'Doghter, hold thy pees.
Mars hath his wille, his knight hath al his bone,
And, by myn heed, thou shalt ben esed sone.'
The trompes, with the loude minstralcye,
The heraudes, that ful loude yolle and crye,
Been in hir wele for Ioye of daun Arcite.
But herkneth me, and stinteth now a lyte,
Which a miracle ther bifel anon.
This fierse Arcite hath of his helm y-don,
And on a courser, for to shewe his face,
He priketh endelong the large place,
Loking upward up-on this Emelye;
And she agayn him caste a freendlich yë,
(For wommen, as to speken in comune,
They folwen al the favour of fortune,)
And she was al his chere, as in his herte.
Out of the ground a furie infernal sterte,
From Pluto sent, at requeste of Saturne,
For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
And leep asyde, and foundred as he leep;
And, er that Arcite may taken keep,
He pighte him on the pomel of his heed,
That in the place he lay as he were deed,
His brest to-brosten with his sadel-bowe.
As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,
So was the blood y-ronnen in his face.
Anon he was y-born out of the place
With herte soor, to Theseus paleys.
Tho was he corven out of his harneys,
And in a bed y-brought ful faire and blyve,
For he was yet in memorie and alyve,

And alway crying after Emelye.
Duk Theseus, with al his companye,
Is comen hoom to Athenes his citee,
With alle blisse and greet solempnitee.
Al be it that this aventure was falle,
He nolde noght disconforten hem alle.
Men seyde eek, that Arcite shal nat dye;
He shal ben heled of his maladye.
And of another thing they were as fayn,
That of hem alle was ther noon y-slayn,
Al were they sore y-hurt, and namely oon,
That with a spere was thirled his brest-boon.
To othere woundes, and to broken armes,
Some hadden salves, and some hadden charmes;
Fermacies of herbes, and eek save
They dronken, for they wolde hir limes have.
For which this noble duk, as he wel can,
Conforteth and honoureth every man,
And made revel al the longe night,
Un-to the straunge lordes, as was right.
Ne ther was holden no disconfitinge,
But as a Iustes or a tourneyinge;
For soothly ther was no disconfiture,
For falling nis nat but an aventure;
Ne to be lad with fors un-to the stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knightes take,
O persone allone, with-outen mo,
And haried forth by arme, foot, and to,
And eek his stede driven forth with staves,
With footmen, bothe yemen and eek knaves,
It nas aretted him no vileinye,
Ther may no man clepen it cowardye.
For which anon duk Theseus leet crye,
To stinten alle rancour and envye,
The gree as wel of o syde as of other,
And either syde y-lyk, as otheres brother;
And yaf hem yiftes after hir degree,
And fully beeld a feste dayes three;
And conveyed the kinges worthily
Out of his toun a Iournee largely.
And hoom wente every man the righte way.
Ther was namore, but 'far wel, have good day!'
Of this bataille I wol namore endyte,
But speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the

Encreesseth at his herte more and more.
The clothered blood, for any leche-craft,
Corrupteth, and is in his bouk y-laft,
That neither veyne-blood, ne ventusinge,
Ne drinke of herbes may ben his helpinge.
The vertu expulsif, or animal,
Fro thilke vertu cleped natural
Ne may the venim voyden, ne expelle.
The pypes of his longes gonne to swelle,
And every lacerte in his brest adoun
Is shent with venim and corrupcioun.
Him gayneth neither, for to gete his lyf,
Vomyt upward, ne dounward laxatif;
Al is to-brosten thilke regioun,
Nature hath now no dominacioun.
And certeinly, ther nature wol nat wirche,
Far-wel, phisyk! go ber the man to chirche!
This al and som, that Arcita mot dye,
For which he sendeth after Emelye,
And Palamon, that was his cosin dere;
Than seyde he thus, as ye shul after here.
'Naught may the woful spirit in myn herte
Declare o poynt of alle my sorwes smerte
To yow, my lady, that I love most;
But I biquethe the service of my gost
To yow aboven every creature,
Sin that my lyf may no lenger dure.
Allas, the wo! allas, the peynes stronge,
That I for yow have suffred, and so longe!
Allas, the deeth! allas, myn Emelye!
Allas, departing of our companye!
Allas, myn hertes quene! allas, my wyf!
Myn hertes lady, endere of my lyf!
What is this world? what asketh men to have?
Now with his love, now in his colde grave
Allone, with-outen any companye,
Far-wel, my swete fo! myn Emelye!
And softe tak me in your armes tweye,
For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.
I have heer with my cosin Palamon
Had stryf and rancour, many a day a-gon,
For love of yow, and for my Ielousye.
And Iupiter so wis my soule gye,
To speken of a servant proprely,

With alle circumstaunces trewely,
That is to seyn, trouthe, honour, and knighthede,
Wisdom, humblesse, estaat, and heigh kinrede,
Fredom, and al that longeth to that art,
So Iupiter have of my soule part,
As in this world right now ne knowe I non
So worthy to ben loved as Palamon,
That serveth yow, and wol don al his lyf.
And if that ever ye shul been a wyf,
Foryet nat Palamon, the gentil man.'
And with that word his speche faille gan,
For from his feet up to his brest was come
The cold of deeth, that hadde him overcome.
And yet more-over, in his armes two
The vital strengthe is lost, and al ago.
Only the intellect, with-outen more,
That dwelled in his herte syk and sore,
Gan faillen, when the herte felte deeth,
Dusked his eyen two, and failled breeth.
But on his lady yet caste he his yë;
His laste word was, 'mercy, Emelye!'
His spirit chaunged hous, and wente ther,
As I cam never, I can nat tellen wher.
Therfor I stinte, I nam no divinistre;
Of soules finde I nat in this registre,
Ne me ne list thilke opiniouns to telle
Of hem, though that they wryten wher they dwelle.
Arcite is cold, ther Mars his soule gye;
Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.
Shrighte Emelye, and howleth Palamon,
And Theseus his suster took anon
Swowninge, and bar hir fro the corps away.
What helpeth it to tarien forth the day,
To tellen how she weep, bothe eve and morwe?
For in swich cas wommen have swich sorwe,
Whan that hir housbonds been from hem ago,
That for the more part they sorwen so,
Or elles fallen in swich maladye,
That at the laste certeinly they dye.
Infinite been the sorwes and the teres
Of olde folk, and folk of tendre yeres,
In al the toun, for deeth of this Theban;
For him ther wepeth bothe child and man;
So greet a weping was ther noon, certayn,
Whan Ector was y-brought, al fresh y-slayn,
To Troye; allas! the pitee that was ther,
Cracching of chekes, rending eek of heer.
'Why woldestow be deed,' thise wommen crye,
'And haddest gold y-nough, and Emelye?'
No man mighte gladen Theseus,
Savinge his olde fader Egeus,
That knew this worldes transmutacioun,
As he had seyn it chaungen up and doun,
Ioye after wo, and wo after gladnesse:
And shewed hem ensamples and lyknesse.
'Right as ther deyed never man,' quod he,
'That he ne livede in erthe in som degree,
Right so ther livede never man,' he seyde,
'In al this world, that som tyme he ne deyde.
This world nis but a thurghfare ful of wo,
And we ben pilgrimes, passinge to and fro;
Deeth is an ende of every worldly sore.'
And over al this yet seyde he muchel more
To this effect, ful wysly to enhorte
The peple, that they sholde hem reconforte.
Duk Theseus, with al his busy cure,
Caste now wher that the sepulture
Of good Arcite may best y-maked be,
And eek most honurable in his degree.
And at the laste he took conclusioun,
That ther as first Arcite and Palamoun
Hadden for love the bataille hem bitwene,
That in that selve grove, swote and grene,
Ther as he hadde his amorous desires,
His compleynt, and for love his hote fires,
He wolde make a fyr, in which thoffice
Funeral he mighte al accomplice;
And leet comaunde anon to hakke and hewe
The okes olde, and leye hem on a rewe
In colpons wel arrayed for to brenne;
His officers with swifte feet they renne

And ryde anon at his comaundement.
And after this, Theseus hath y-sent
After a bere, and it al over-spradde
With cloth of gold, the richest that he hadde.
And of the same suyte he cladde Arcite;
Upon his hondes hadde he gloves whyte;
Eek on his heed a croune of laurer grene,
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene.
He leyde him bare the visage on the bere,
Therwith he weep that pitee was to here.
And for the peple sholde seen him alle,
Whan it was day, he broghte him to the halle,
That roreth of the crying and the soun.
Tho cam this woful Theban Palamoun,
With flotery berd, and ruggy asshy heres,
In clothes blake, y-dropped al with teres;
And, passing othere of weping, Emelye,
The rewfulleste of al the companye.
In as muche as the service sholde be
The more noble and riche in his degree,
Duk Theseus leet forth three stedes bringe,
That trapped were in steel al gliteringe,
And covered with the armes of daun Arcite.
Up-on thise stedes, that weren grete and whyte,
Ther seten folk, of which oon bar his sheeld,
Another his spere up in his hondes heeld;
The thridde bar with him his bowe Turkeys,
Of brend gold was the cas, and eek the harneys;
And riden forth a pas with sorweful chere
Toward the grove, as ye shul after here.
The nobleste of the Grekes that ther were
Upon hir shuldres carieden the bere,
With slakke pas, and eyen rede and wete,
Thurgh-out the citee, by the maister-strete,
That sprad was al with blak, and wonder hye
Right of the same is al the strete y-wrye.
Up-on the right hond wente old Egeus,
And on that other syde duk Theseus,
With vessels in hir hand of gold ful fyn,
Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn;
Eek Palamon, with ful greet companye;
And after that cam woful Emelye,
With fyr in honde, as was that tyme the gyse,
To do thoffice of funeral servyse.
Heigh labour, and ful greet apparaillinge
Was at the service and the fyr-makinge,
That with his grene top the heven raughte,
And twenty fadme of brede the armes straughte;
This is to seyn, the bowes were so brode.
Of stree first ther was leyd ful many a lode.
But how the fyr was maked up on heighte,
And eek the names how the treës highte,
As ook, firre, birch, asp, alder, holm, popler,
Wilow, elm, plane, ash, box, chasteyn, lind, laurer,
Mapul, thorn, beech, hasel, ew, whippel-tree,
How they weren feld, shal nat be told for me;
Ne how the goddes ronnen up and doun,
Disherited of hir habitacioun,
In which they woneden in reste and pees,
Nymphes, Faunes, and Amadrides;
Ne how the bestes and the briddes alle
Fledden for fere, whan the wode was falle;
Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
That was nat wont to seen the sonne bright;
Ne how the fyr was couched first with stree,
And than with drye stokkes cloven a three,
And than with grene wode and spycerye,
And than with cloth of gold and with perrye,
And gerlandes hanging with ful many a flour,
The mirre, thencens, with al so greet odour;
Ne how Arcite lay among al this,
Ne what richesse aboute his body is;
Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,

Putte in the fyr of funeral servyse;
Ne how she swowned whan men made the fyr,
Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desyr;
Ne what Ieweles men in the fyr tho caste,
Whan that the fyr was greet and brente faste;
Ne how som caste hir sheeld, and som hir spere,
And of hir vestiments, whiche that they were,
And cuppes ful of wyn, and milk, and blood,
Into the fyr, that brente as it were wood;
Ne how the Grekes with an huge route
Thryës riden al the fyr aboute
Up-on the left hand, with a loud shoutinge,
And thryës with hir speres clateringe;
And thryës how the ladies gonne crye;
Ne how that lad was hom-ward Emelye;
Ne how Arcite is brent to asshen colde;
Ne how that liche-wake was y-holde
Al thilke night, ne how the Grekes pleye
The wake-pleyes, ne kepe I nat to seye;
Who wrastleth best naked, with oille enoynt,
Ne who that bar him best, in no disioynt.
I wol nat tellen eek how that they goon
Hoom til Athenes, whan the pley is doon;
But shortly to the poynt than wol I wende,
And maken of my longe tale an ende.
By processe and by lengthe of certeyn yeres
Al stinted is the moorning and the teres
Of Grekes, by oon general assent.
Than semed me ther was a parlement
At Athenes, up-on certeyn poynts and cas;
Among the whiche poynts y-spoken was
To have with certeyn contrees alliaunce,
And have fully of Thebans obeisaunce.
For which this noble Theseus anon
Leet senden after gentil Palamon,
Unwist of him what was the cause and why;
But in his blake clothes sorwefully
He cam at his comaundement in hye.
Tho sente Theseus for Emelye.
Whan they were set, and hust was al the place,
And Theseus abiden hadde a space
Er any word cam from his wyse brest,
His eyen sette he ther as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he syked stille,
And after that right thus he seyde his wille.
'The firste moevere of the cause above,
Whan he first made the faire cheyne of love,
Greet was theffect, and heigh was his entente;
Wel wiste he why, and what ther-of he mente;
For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
The fyr, the eyr, the water, and the lond
In certeyn boundes, that they may nat flee;
That same prince and that moevere,' quod he,
'Hath stablissed, in this wrecched world adoun,
Certeyne dayes and duracioun
To al that is engendred in this place,
Over the whiche day they may nat pace,
Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge;
Ther needeth non auctoritee allegge,
For it is preved by experience,
But that me list declaren my sentence.
Than may men by this ordre wel discerne,
That thilke moevere stable is and eterne.
Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,
That every part deryveth from his hool.
For nature hath nat take his beginning
Of no partye ne cantel of a thing,
But of a thing that parfit is and stable,
Descending so, til it be corrumpable.
And therfore, of his wyse purveyaunce,
He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,
That speces of thinges and progressiouns
Shullen enduren by successiouns,
And nat eterne be, with-oute lye:
This maistow understonde and seen at yë.
'Lo the ook, that hath so long a norisshinge
From tyme that it first biginneth springe,
And hath so long a lyf, as we may see,
Yet at the laste wasted is the tree.

'Considereth eek, how that the harde stoon
Under our feet, on which we trede and goon,
Yit wasteth it, as it lyth by the weye.
The brode river somtyme wexeth dreye.
The grete tounes see we wane and wende.
Than may ye see that al this thing hath ende.
'Of man and womman seen we wel also,
That nedeth, in oon of thise termes two,
This is to seyn, in youthe or elles age,
He moot ben deed, the king as shal a page;
Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
Som in the large feeld, as men may se;
Ther helpeth noght, al goth that ilke weye.
Thanne may I seyn that al this thing moot deye.
What maketh this but Iupiter the king?
The which is prince and cause of alle thing,
Converting al un-to his propre welle,
From which it is deryved, sooth to telle.
And here-agayns no creature on lyve
Of no degree availleth for to stryve.
'Thanne is it wisdom, as it thinketh me,
To maken vertu of necessitee,
And take it wel, that we may nat eschue,
And namely that to us alle is due.
And who-so gruccheth ought, he dooth folye,
And rebel is to him that al may gye.
And certeinly a man hath most honour
To dyen in his excellence and flour,
Whan he is siker of his gode name;
Than hath he doon his freend, ne him, no shame.
And gladder oghte his freend ben of his deeth,
Whan with honour up-yolden is his breeth,
Than whan his name apalled is for age;
For al forgeten is his vasselage.
Than is it best, as for a worthy fame,
To dyen whan that he is best of name.
The contrarie of al this is wilfulnesse.
Why grucchen we? why have we hevinesse,
That good Arcite, of chivalrye flour
Departed is, with duetee and honour,
Out of this foule prison of this lyf?
Why grucchen heer his cosin and his wyf
Of his wel-fare that loved hem so weel?
Can he hem thank? nay, God wot, never a deel,
That bothe his soule and eek hem-self offende,
And yet they mowe hir lustes nat amende.
'What may I conclude of this longe serie,
But, after wo, I rede us to be merie,
And thanken Iupiter of al his grace?
And, er that we departen from this place,
I rede that we make, of sorwes two,
O parfyt Ioye, lasting ever-mo;
And loketh now, wher most sorwe is her-inne,
Ther wol we first amenden and biginne.
'Suster,' quod he, 'this is my fulle assent,
With al thavys heer of my parlement,
That gentil Palamon, your owne knight,
That serveth yow with wille, herte, and might,
And ever hath doon, sin that ye first him knewe,
That ye shul, of your grace, up-on him rewe,
And taken him for housbonde and for lord:
Leen me your hond, for this is our acord.
Lat see now of your wommanly pitee.
He is a kinges brother sone, pardee;
And, though he were a povre bacheler,
Sin he hath served yow so many a yeer,
And had for yow so greet adversitee,
It moste been considered, leveth me;
For gentil mercy oghte to passen right.'
Than seyde he thus to Palamon ful right;
'I trowe ther nedeth litel sermoning
To make yow assente to this thing.
Com neer, and tak your lady by the hond.'
Bitwixen hem was maad anon the bond,
That highte matrimoine or mariage,
By al the counseil and the baronage.
And thus with alle blisse and melodye

Hath Palamon y-wedded Emelye.
And God, that al this wyde world hath wroght,
Sende him his love, that hathe it dere a-boght.
For now is Palamon in alle wele,
Living in blisse, in richesse, and in hele;
And Emelye him loveth so tendrely,
And he hir serveth al-so gentilly,
That never was ther no word hem bitwene
Of Ielousye, or any other tene.
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye;
And God save al this faire companye! — Amen.

Here is ended the Knightes Tale.

THE MILLER'S PROLOGUE.

Here folwen the wordes bitwene the Host and the Millere.

WHAN that the Knight had thus his tale y-told,
In al the route nas ther yong ne old
That he ne seyde it was a noble storie,
And worthy for to drawen to memorie;
And namely the gentils everichoon.
Our Hoste lough and swoor, 'so moot I goon,
This gooth aright; unbokeled is the male;
Lat see now who shal telle another tale:
For trewely, the game is wel bigonne.
Now telleth ye, sir Monk, if that ye conne,
Sumwhat, to quyte with the Knightes tale.'
The Miller, that for-dronken was al pale,
So that unnethe up-on his hors he sat,
He nolde avalen neither hood ne hat,
Ne abyde no man for his curteisye,
But in Pilates vois he gan to crye,
And swoor by armes and by blood and bones,
'I can a noble tale for the nones,
With which I wol now quyte the Knightes tale.'
Our Hoste saugh that he was dronke of ale,
And seyde: 'abyd, Robin, my leve brother,
Som bettre man shal telle us first another:
Abyd, and lat us werken thriftily.' 'By goddes soul,' quod he, 'that wol nat I;
For I wol speke, or elles go my wey.'
Our Hoste answerde: 'tel on, a devel wey!
Thou art a fool, thy wit is overcome.' 'Now herkneth,' quod the Miller, 'alle and some!
But first I make a protestacioun
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my soun;
And therfore, if that I misspeke or seye,
Wyte it the ale of Southwerk, I yow preye;
For I wol telle a legende and a lyf
Bothe of a Carpenter, and of his wyf,
How that a clerk hath set the wrightes cappe.'
The Reve answerde and seyde, 'stint thy clappe,
Lat be thy lewed dronken harlotrye.
It is a sinne and eek a greet folye
To apeiren any man, or him diffame,
And eek to bringen wyves in swich fame.
Thou mayst y-nogh of othere thinges seyn.'
This dronken Miller spak ful sone ageyn,
And seyde, 'leve brother Osewold,
Who hath no wyf, he is no cokewold.
But I sey nat therfore that thou art oon;
Ther been ful gode wyves many oon,
And ever a thousand gode ayeyns oon badde,
That knowestow wel thy-self, but-if thou madde.
Why artow angry with my tale now?
I have a wyf, pardee, as well as thou,

Yet nolde I, for the oxen in my plogh,
Taken up-on me more than y-nogh, 3160
As demen of my-self that I were oon;
I wol beleve wel that I am noon.
An housbond shal nat been inquisitif
Of goddes privetee, nor of his wyf.
So he may finde goddes foyson there,
Of the remenant nedeth nat enquere.'
What sholde I more seyn, but this Millere 3167
He nolde his wordes for no man forbere,
But tolde his cherles tale in his manere;
Me thinketh that I shal reherce it here.
And ther-fore every gentil wight I preye,
For goddes love, demeth nat that I seye
Of evel entente, but that I moot reherce
Hir tales alle, be they bettre or werse, 3175
Or elles falsen som of my matere.
And therfore, who-so list it nat y-here,
Turne over the leef, and chese another tale;
For he shal finde y-nowe, grete and smale,
Of storial thing that toucheth gentillesse,
And eek moralitee and holinesse; 3180
Blameth nat me if that ye chese amis.
The Miller is a cherl, ye knowe wel this;
So was the Reve, and othere many mo,
And harlotrye they tolden bothe two.
Avyseth yow and putte me out of blame;
And eek men shal nat make ernest of game. 3186

Here endeth the prologe.

THE MILLERES TALE.

Here biginneth the Millere his tale.

WHYLOM ther was dwellinge at Oxenford
A riche gnof, that gestes heeld to bord,
And of his craft he was a Carpenter.
With him ther was dwellinge a povre scoler, 3190
Had lerned art, but al his fantasye
Was turned for to lerne astrologye,
And coude a certeyn of conclusiouns
To demen by interrogaciouns,
If that men axed him in certein houres,
Whan that men sholde have droghte or elles shoures, 3196
Or if men axed him what sholde bifalle
Of every thing, I may nat rekene hem alle.
This clerk was cleped hende Nicholas;
Of derne love he coude and of solas; 3200
And ther-to he was sleigh and ful privee,
And lyk a mayden meke for to see.
A chambre hadde he in that hostelrye
Allone, with-outen any companye,
Ful fetisly y-dight with herbes swote; 3205
And he him-self as swete as is the rote
Of licorys, or any cetewale.
His Almageste and bokes grete and smale,
His astrelabie, longinge for his art,
His augrim-stones layen faire a-part 3210
On shelves couched at his beddes heed:
His presse y-covered with a falding reed.
And al above ther lay a gay sautrye,
On which he made a nightes melodye
So swetely, that al the chambre rong;
And *Angelus ad virginem* he song; 3216
And after that he song the kinges note;
Ful often blessed was his mery throte.
And thus this swete clerk his tyme spente
After his freendes finding and his rente.
This Carpenter had wedded newe a wyf 3221
Which that he lovede more than his lyf;
Of eightetene yeer she was of age.
Ialous he was, and heeld hir narwe in cage,
For she was wilde and yong, and he was old, 3225
And demed him-self ben lyk a cokewold.
He knew nat Catoun, for his wit was rude,
That bad man sholde wedde his similitude.
Men sholde wedden after hir estaat, 3229
For youthe and elde is often at debaat.
But sith that he was fallen in the snare,
He moste endure, as other folk, his care.
Fair was this yonge wyf, and ther-with-al
As any wesele hir body gent and smal.

A ceynt she werede barred al of silk,
A barmclooth eek as whyt as morne milk
Up-on hir lendes, ful of many a gore.
Whyt was hir smok, and brouded al bifore
And eek bihinde, on hir coler aboute,
Of col-blak silk, with-inne and eek without.
The tapes of hir whyte voluper
Were of the same suyte of hir coler;
Hir filet brood of silk, and set ful hye:
And sikerly she hadde a likerous yë.
Ful smale y-pulled were hir browes two,
And tho were bent, and blake as any sloo.
She was ful more blisful on to see
Than is the newe pere-ionette tree;
And softer than the wolle is of a wether.
And by hir girdel heeng a purs of lether
Tasseld with silk, and perled with latoun.
In al this world, to seken up and doun,
There nis no man so wys, that coude thenche
So gay a popelote, or swich a wenche.
Ful brighter was the shyning of hir hewe
Than in the tour the noble y-forged newe.
But of hir song, it was as loude and yerne
As any swalwe sittinge on a berne.
Ther-to she coude skippe and make game,
As any kide or calf folwinge his dame.
Hir mouth was swete as bragot or the meeth,
Or hord of apples leyd in hey or heeth.
Winsinge she was, as is a Ioly colt,
Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.
A brooch she baar up-on hir lowe coler,
As brood as is the bos of a bocler.
Hir shoes were laced on hir legges hye;
She was a prymerole, a pigges-nye
For any lord to leggen in his bedde,
Or yet for any good yeman to wedde.

Now sire, and eft sire, so bifel the cas,
That on a day this hende Nicholas
Fil with this yonge wyf to rage and pleye,
Whyl that hir housbond was at Oseneye,
As clerkes ben ful subtile and ful queynte;
And prively he caughte hir by the queynte,
And seyde, 'y-wis, but if ich have my wille,
For derne love of thee, lemman, I spille.'
And heeld hir harde by thē haunchebones,
And seyde, 'lemman, love me al at-ones,
Or I wol dyen, also god me save!'
And she sprong as a colt doth in the trave,
And with hir heed she wryed faste awey,
And seyde, 'I wol nat kisse thee, by my fey,
Why, lat be,' quod she, 'lat be, Nicholas,
Or I wol crye out "harrow" and "allas."
Do wey your handes for your curteisye!'
This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye,
And spak so faire, and profred hir so faste,
That she hir love him graunted atte laste,
And swoor hir ooth, by seint Thomas of Kent,
That she wol been at his comandement,
Whan that she may hir leyser wel espye.
'Myn housbond is so ful of Ialousye,
That but ye wayte wel and been privee,
I woot right wel I nam but dēed,' quod she.
'Ye moste been ful derne, as in this cas.'
'Nay ther-of care thee noght,' quod Nicholas,
'A clerk had litherly biset his whyle,
But-if he coude a Carpenter bigyle.'
And thus they been acorded and y-sworn
To wayte a tyme, as I have told biforn.
Whan Nicholas had doon thus everydeel,
And thakked hir aboute the lendes weel,
He kist hir swete, and taketh his sautrye,
And pleyeth faste, and maketh melodye.
Than fil it thus, that to the parish-chirche,
Cristes owne werkes for to wirche,
This gode wyf wente on an haliday;
Hir forheed shoon as bright as any day,
So was it wasshen whan she leet hir werk.

Now was ther of that chirche a parish-clerk,
The which that was y-cleped Absolon.

Crul was his heer, and as the gold it shoon,
And strouted as a fanne large and brode;
Ful streight and even lay his Ioly shode.
His rode was reed, his eyen greye as goos;
With Powles window corven on his shoos,
In hoses rede he wente fetisly.
Y-clad he was ful smal and proprely,
Al in a kirtel of a light wachet;
Ful faire and thikke been the poyntes set.
And ther-up-on he hadde a gay surplys
As whyt as is the blosme up-on the rys.
A mery child he was, so god me save,
Wel coude he laten blood and clippe and shave,
And make a chartre of lond or acquitaunce.
In twenty manere coude he trippe and daunce
After the scole of Oxenforde tho,
And with his legges casten to and fro,
And pleyen songes on a small rubible;
Ther-to he song som-tyme a loud quinible;
And as wel coude he pleye on his giterne.
In al the toun nas brewhous ne taverne
That he ne visited with his solas,
Ther any gaylard tappestere was.
But sooth to seyn, he was somdel squaymous
Of farting, and of speche daungerous.
This Absolon, that Iolif was and gay,
Gooth with a sencer on the haliday,
Sensinge the wyves of the parish faste;
And many a lovely look on hem he caste,
And namely on this carpenteres wyf.
To loke on hir him thoughte a mery lyf,
She was so propre and swete and likerous.
I dar wel seyn, if she had been a mous,
And he a cat, he wolde hir hente anon.
This parish-clerk, this Ioly Absolon,
Hath in his herte swich a love-longinge,
That of no wyf ne took he noon offringe;
For curteisye, he seyde, he wolde noon.
The mone, whan it was night, ful brighte shoon,
And Absolon his giterne hath y-take,
For paramours, he thoghte for to wake.

And forth he gooth, Iolif and amorous,
Til he cam to the carpenteres hous
A litel after cokkes hadde y-crowe;
And dressed him up by a shot-windowe
That was up-on the carpenteres wal.
He singeth in his vois gentil and smal,
'Now, dere lady, if thy wille be,
I preye yow that ye wol rewe on me,'
Ful wel acordaunt to his giterninge.
This carpenter awook, and herde him singe,
And spak un-to his wyf, and seyde anon,
'What! Alison! herestow nat Absolon
That chaunteth thus under our boures wal?'
And she answerde hir housbond ther-with-al,
'Yis, god wot, Iohn, I here it every-del.'
This passeth forth; what wol ye bet than wel?
Fro day to day this Ioly Absolon
So woweth hir, that him is wo bigon.
He waketh al the night and al the day;
He kempte hise lokkes brode, and made him gay;
He woweth hir by menes and brocage,
And swoor he wolde been hir owne page;
He singeth, brokkinge as a nightingale;
He sente hir piment, meeth, and spyced ale,
And wafres, pyping hote out of the glede;
And for she was of toune, he profred mede.
For som folk wol ben wonnen for richesse,
And som for strokes, and som for gentillesse.
Somtyme, to shewe his lightnesse and maistrye,
He pleyeth Herodes on a scaffold hye.
But what availleth him as in this cas?
She loveth so this hende Nicholas,
That Absolon may blowe the bukkes horn;
He ne hadde for his labour but a scorn;
And thus she maketh Absolon hir ape,
And al his ernest turneth til a Iape.
Ful sooth is this proverbe, it is no lye,
Men seyn right thus, 'alwey the nye slye
Maketh the ferre leve to be looth.'

For though that Absolon be wood or wrooth,
By-cause that he fer was from hir sighte,
This nye Nicholas stood in his lighte.
Now bere thee wel, thou hende Nicholas!
For Absolon may waille and singe 'allas.'
And so bifel it on a Saterday,
This carpenter was goon til Osenay;
And hende Nicholas and Alisoun
Acorded been to this conclusioun,
That Nicholas shal shapen him a wyle
This sely Ialous housbond to bigyle;
And if so be the game wente aright,
She sholde slepen in his arm al night,
For this was his desyr and hir also.
And right anon, with-outen wordes mo,
This Nicholas no lenger wolde tarie,
But doth ful softe un-to his chambre carie
Bothe mete and drinke for a day or tweye,
And to hir housbonde bad hir for to seye,
If that he axed after Nicholas,
She sholde seye she niste where he was,
Of al that day she saugh him nat with yë;
She trowed that he was in maladye,
For, for no cry, hir mayde coude him calle;
He nolde answere, for no-thing that mighte falle.
This passeth forth al thilke Saterday,
That Nicholas stille in his chambre lay,
And eet and sleep, or dide what him leste,
Til Sonday, that the sonne gooth to reste.
This sely carpenter hath greet merveyle
Of Nicholas, or what thing mighte him eyle,
And seyde, 'I am adrad, by seint Thomas,
It standeth nat aright with Nicholas.
God shilde that he deyde sodeynly!
This world is now ful tikel, sikerly;
I saugh to-day a cors y-born to chirche
That now, on Monday last, I saugh him wirche.
Go up,' quod he un-to his knave anoon,
'Clepe at his dore, or knokke with a stoon,
Loke how it is, and tel me boldely.'
This knave gooth him up ful sturdily,
And at the chambre-dore, whyl that he stood,
He cryde and knokked as that he were wood: —
'What! how! what do ye, maister Nicholay?
How may ye slepen al the longe day?'
But al for noght, he herde nat a word;
An hole he fond, ful lowe up-on a bord,
Ther as the cat was wont in for to crepe;
And at that hole he looked in ful depe,
And at the laste he hadde of him a sighte.
This Nicholas sat gaping ever up-righte,
As he had kyked on the newe mone.
Adoun he gooth, and tolde his maister sone
In what array he saugh this ilke man.
This carpenter to bleesen him bigan,
And seyde, 'help us, seinte Frideswyde!
A man woot litel what him shal bityde.
This man is falle, with his astromye,
In som woodnesse or in som agonye;
I thoghte ay wel how that it sholde be!
Men sholde nat knowe of goddes privetee.
Ye, blessed be alwey a lewed man,
That noght but oonly his bileve can!
So ferde another clerk with astromye;
He walked in the feeldes for to prye
Up-on the sterres, what ther sholde bifalle,
Til he was in a marle-pit y-falle;
He saugh nat that. But yet, by seint Thomas,
Me reweth sore of hende Nicholas.
He shal be rated of his studying,
If that I may, by Iesus, hevene king!
Get me a staf, that I may underspore,
Whyl that thou, Robin, hevest up the dore.
He shal out of his studying, as I gesse' —
And to the chambre-dore he gan him dresse.
His knave was a strong carl for the nones,
And by the haspe he haf it up atones;

In-to the floor the dore fil anon.
This Nicholas sat ay as stille as stoon,
And ever gaped upward in-to the eir.
This carpenter wende he were in despeir,
And hente him by the sholdres mightily,
And shook him harde, and cryde spitously,
'What! Nicholay! what, how! what loke adoun!
Awake, and thenk on Cristes passioun;
I crouche thee from elves and fro wightes!'
Ther-with the night-spel seyde he anonrightes
On foure halves of the hous aboute,
And on the threshfold of the dore without: —
'Iesu Crist, and seynt Benedight,
Blesse this hous from every wikked wight,
For nightes verye, the white *pater-noster!*
Where wentestow, seynt Petres soster?'
And atte laste this hende Nicholas
Gan for to syke sore, and seyde, 'allas!
Shal al the world be lost eftsones now?'
This carpenter answerde, 'what seystow?
What! thenk on god, as we don, men that swinke.'
This Nicholas answerde, 'fecche me drinke;
And after wol I speke in privetee
Of certeyn thing that toucheth me and thee;
I wol telle it non other man, certeyn.'
This carpenter goth doun, and comth ageyn,
And broghte of mighty ale a large quart;
And whan that ech of hem had dronke his part,
This Nicholas his dore faste shette,
And doun the carpenter by him he sette
He seyde, 'Iohn, myn hoste lief and dere,
Thou shalt up-on thy trouthe swere me here,
That to no wight thou shalt this conseil wreye;
For it is Cristes conseil that I seye,
And if thou telle it man, thou art forlore;
For this vengaunce thou shalt han therfore,
That if thou wreye me, thou shalt be wood!'
'Nay, Crist forbede it, for his holy blood!'
Quod tho this sely man, 'I nam no labbe,
Ne, though I seye, I nam nat lief to gabbe.
Sey what thou wolt, I shal it never telle
To child ne wyf, by him that harwed helle!'
'Now John,' quod Nicholas, 'I wol nat lye;
I have y-founde in myn astrologye,
As I have loked in the mone bright,
That now, a Monday next, at quarter-night,
Shal falle a reyn and that so wilde and wood,
That half so greet was never Noës flood.
This world,' he seyde, 'in lasse than in an hour
Shal al be dreynt, so hidous is the shour;
Thus shal mankynde drenche and lese hir lyf.'
This carpenter answerde, 'allas, my wyf!
And shal she drenche? allas! myn Alisoun!'
For sorwe of this he fil almost adoun,
And seyde, 'is ther no remedie in this cas?'
'Why, yis, for gode,' quod hende Nicholas,
'If thou wolt werken after lore and reed;
Thou mayst nat werken after thyn owene heed.
For thus seith Salomon, that was ful trewe,
"Werk al by conseil, and thou shalt nat rewe."
And if thou werken wolt by good conseil,
I undertake, with-outen mast and seyl,
Yet shal I saven hir and thee and me.
Hastow nat herd how saved was Noë,

Whan that our lord had warned him biforn
That al the world with water sholde be lorn?'
'Yis,' quod this carpenter, 'ful yore ago.'
'Hastow nat herd,' quod Nicholas, 'also
The sorwe of Noë with his felawshipe,
Er that he mighte gete his wyf to shipe?
Him had be lever, I dar wel undertake,
At thilke tyme, than alle hise wetheres blake,
That she hadde had a ship hir-self allone.
And ther-fore, wostow what is best to done?
This asketh haste, and of an hastif thing
Men may nat preche or maken tarying.
Anon go gete us faste in-to this in
A kneding-trogh, or elles a kimelin,
For ech of us, but loke that they be large,
In whiche we mowe swimme as in a barge,
And han ther-inne vitaille suffisant
But for a day; fy on the remenant!
The water shal aslake and goon away
Aboute pryme up-on the nexte day.
But Robin may nat wite of this, thy knave,
Ne eek thy mayde Gille I may nat save;
Axe nat why, for though thou aske me,
I wol nat tellen goddes privetee.
Suffiseth thee, but if thy wittes madde,
To han as greet a grace as Noë hadde.
Thy wyf shal I wel saven, out of doute,
Go now thy wey, and speed thee heer-aboute.
But whan thou hast, for hir and thee and me,
Y-geten us thise kneding-tubbes three,
Than shaltow hange hem in the roof ful hye,
That no man of our purveyaunce spye.
And whan thou thus hast doon as I have seyd,
And hast our vitaille faire in hem y-leyd,
And eek an ax, to smyte the corde atwo
When that the water comth, that we may go,
And broke an hole an heigh, up-on the gable,
Unto the gardin-ward, over the stable,
That we may frely passen forth our way
Whan that the grete shour is goon away —
Than shaltow swimme as myrie, I undertake,
As doth the whyte doke after hir drake.
Than wol I clepe, "how! Alison! how! John!
Be myrie, for the flood wol passe anon."
And thou wolt seyn, "hayl, maister Nicholay!
Good morwe, I se thee wel, for it is day."
And than shul we be lordes al our lyf
Of al the world, as Noë and his wyf.
But of o thyng I warne thee ful right,
Be wel avysed, on that ilke night
That we ben entred in-to shippes bord,
That noon of us ne speke nat a word,
Ne clepe, ne crye, but been in his preyere;
For it is goddes owne heste dere.
Thy wyf and thou mote hange fer a-twinne,
For that bitwixe yow shal be no sinne
No more in looking than ther shal in dede;
This ordinance is seyd, go, god thee spede!
Tomorwe at night, whan men ben alle aslepe,
In-to our kneding-tubbes wol we crepe,
And sitten ther, abyding goddes grace.
Go now thy wey, I have no lenger space
To make of this no lenger sermoning.
Men seyn thus, "send the wyse, and sey no-thing;"
Thou art so wys, it nedeth thee nat teche;
Go, save our lyf, and that I thee biseche.'
This sely carpenter goth forth his wey.
Ful ofte he seith 'allas' and 'weylawey,'
And to his wyf he tolde his privetee;
And she was war, and knew it bet than he.

What al this queynte cast was for to seye.
But nathelees she ferde as she wolde deye,
And seyde, 'allas! go forth thy wey anon,
Help us to scape, or we ben lost echon;
I am thy trewe verray wedded wyf;
Go, dere spouse, and help to save our lyf.'
Lo! which a greet thyng is affeccioun!
Men may dye of imaginacioun,
So depe may impressioun be take.
This sely carpenter biginneth quake;
Him thinketh verraily that he may see
Noës flood come walwing as the see
To drenchen Alisoun, his hony dere.
He wepeth, weyleth, maketh sory chere,
He syketh with ful many a sory swogh.
He gooth and geteth him a kneding-trogh,
And after that a tubbe and a kimelin,
And prively he sente hem to his in,
And heng hem in the roof in privetee.
His owne hand he made laddres three,
To climben by the ronges and the stalkes
Un-to the tubbes hanginge in the balkes,
And hem vitailled, bothe trogh and tubbe,
With breed and chese, and good ale in a Iubbe,
Suffysinge right y-nogh as for a day.
But er that he had maad al this array,
He sente his knave, and eek his wenche also,
Up-on his nede to London for to go.
And on the Monday, whan it drow to night,
He shette his dore with-oute candel-light,
And dressed al thing as it sholde be.
And shortly, up they clomben alle three;
They sitten stille wel a furlong-way.
'Now, *Pater-noster*, clom!' seyde Nicholay,
And 'clom,' quod John, and 'clom,' seyde Alisoun.
This carpenter seyde his devocioun,
And stille he sit, and biddeth his preyere,
Awaytinge on the reyn, if he it here.
The dede sleep, for wery bisinesse,
Fil on this carpenter right, as I gesse,
Aboute corfew-tyme, or litel more;
For travail of his goost he groneth sore,
And eft he routeth, for his heed mislay.
Doun of the laddre stalketh Nicholay,
And Alisoun, ful softe adoun she spedde;
With-outen wordes mo, they goon to bedde
Ther-as the carpenter is wont to lye.
Ther was the revel and the melodye;
And thus lyth Alison and Nicholas,
In bisinesse of mirthe and of solas,
Til that the belle of laudes gan to ringe,
And freres in the chauncel gonne singe.
This parish-clerk, this amorous Absolon,
That is for love alwey so wo bigon,
Up-on the Monday was at Oseneye
With companye, him to disporte and pleye,
And axed up-on cas a cloisterer
Ful prively after John the carpenter;
And he drough him a-part out of the chirche,
And seyde, 'I noot, I saugh him here nat wirche
Sin Saterday; I trow that he be went
For timber, ther our abbot hath him sent;
For he is wont for timber for to go,
And dwellen at the grange a day or two;
Or elles he is at his hous, certeyn;
Wher that he be, I can nat sothly seyn.'
This Absolon ful Ioly was and light,
And thoghte, 'now is tyme wake al night;
For sikirly I saugh him nat stiringe
Aboute his dore sin day bigan to springe.
So moot I thryve, I shal, at cokkes crowe,
Ful prively knokken at his windowe
That stant ful lowe up-on his boures wal.
To Alison now wol I tellen al
My love-longing, for yet I shal nat misse
That at the leste wey I shal hir kisse.
Som maner confort shal I have, parfay,
My mouth hath icched al this longe day;
That is a signe of kissing atte leste.

Al night me mette eek, I was at a feste.
Therfor I wol gon slepe an houre or tweye,
And al the night than wol I wake and pleye.'
Whan that the firste cok hath crowe, anon
Up rist this Ioly lover Absolon,
And him arrayeth gay, at point-devys.
But first he cheweth greyn and lycorys,
To smellen swete, er he had kembd his heer.
Under his tonge a trewe love he beer,
For ther-by wende he to ben gracious.
He rometh to the carpenteres hous,
And stille he stant under the shot-windowe;
Un-to his brest it raughte, it was so lowe;
And softe he cogheth with a semi-soun —
'What do ye, hony-comb, swete Alisoun?
My faire brid, my swete cinamome,
Awaketh, lemman myn, and speketh to me!
Wel litel thenken ye up-on my wo,
That for your love I swete ther I go.
No wonder is thogh that I swelte and swete;
I moorne as doth a lamb after the tete.
Y-wis, lemman, I have swich love-longinge,
That lyk a turtel trewe is my moorninge;
I may nat ete na more than a mayde.'
'Go fro the window, Iakke fool,' she sayde,
'As help me god, it wol nat be "com ba me,"
I love another, and elles I were to blame,
Wel bet than thee, by Iesu, Absolon!
Go forth thy wey, or I wol caste a ston,
And lat me slepe, a twenty devel wey!'
'Allas,' quod Absolon, 'and weylawey!
That trewe love was ever so yvel biset!
Than kisse me, sin it may be no bet,
For Iesus love and for the love of me.'
'Wiltow than go thy wey ther-with?' quod she.
'Ye, certes, lemman,' quod this Absolon.
'Thanne make thee redy,' quod she, 'I come anon;'
And un-to Nicholas she seyde stille,
'Now hust, and thou shalt laughen al thy fille.'
This Absolon doun sette him on his knees,
And seyde, 'I am a lord at alle degrees;
For after this I hope ther cometh more!
Lemman, thy grace, and swete brid, thyn ore!'
The window she undoth, and that in haste,
'Have do,' quod she, 'com of, and speed thee faste,
Lest that our neighebores thee espye.'
This Absolon gan wype his mouth ful drye;
Derk was the night as pich, or as the cole,
And at the window out she putte hir hole,
And Absolon, him fil no bet ne wers,
But with his mouth he kiste hir naked ers
Ful savourly, er he was war of this.
Abak he sterte, and thoghte it was amis,
For wel he wiste a womman hath no berd;
He felte a thing al rough and long y-herd,
And seyde, 'fy! allas! what have I do?'
'Tehee!' quod she, and clapte the window to;
And Absolon goth forth a sory pas.
'A berd, a berd!' quod hende Nicholas,
'By goddes *corpus*, this goth faire and weel!'
This sely Absolon herde every deel,
And on his lippe he gan for anger byte;
And to him-self he seyde, 'I shal thee quyte!'
Who rubbeth now, who froteth now his lippes
With dust, with sond, with straw, with clooth, with chippes,
But Absolon, that seith ful ofte, 'allas!
My soule bitake I un-to Sathanas,
But me wer lever than al this toun,' quod he,
'Of this despyt awroken for to be!
Allas!' quod he, 'allas! I ne hadde y-bleynt!'
His hote love was cold and al y-queynt;

For fro that tyme that he had kiste hir ers,
Of paramours he sette nat a kers,
For he was heled of his maladye;
Ful ofte paramours he gan deffye,
And weep as dooth a child that is y-bete.
A softe paas he wente over the strete
Un-til a smith men cleped daun Gerveys,
That in his forge smithed plough-harneys;
He sharpeth shaar and culter bisily.
This Absolon knokketh al esily,
And seyde, 'undo, Gerveys, and that anon.'
'What, who artow?' 'It am I, Absolon.'
'What Absolon! for Cristes swete tree,
Why ryse ye so rathe, ey, *benedicite!*
What eyleth yow? som gay gerl, god it woot,
Hath broght yow thus up-on the viritoot;
By sëynt Note, ye woot wel what I mene.'
This Absolon ne roghte nat a bene
Of al his pley, no word agayn he yaf;
He hadde more tow on his distaf
Than Gerveys knew, and seyde, 'freend so dere,
That hote culter in the chimenee here,
As lene it me, I have ther-with to done,
And I wol bringe it thee agayn ful sone.'
Gerveys answerde, 'certes, were it gold,
Or in a poke nobles alle untold,
Thou sholdest have, as I am trewe smith;
Ey, Cristes foo! what wol ye do ther-with?'
'Ther-of,' quod Absolon, 'be as be may;
I shal wel telle it thee to-morwe day'—
And caughte the culter by the colde stele.
Ful softe out at the dore he gan to stele,
And wente un-to the carpenteres wal.
He cogheth first, and knokketh ther-with-al
Upon the windowe, right as he dide er.
This Alison answerde, 'Who is ther
That knokketh so? I warante it a theef.'
'Why, nay,' quod he, 'god woot, my swete leef,
I am thyn Absolon, my dereling!
Of gold,' quod he, 'I have thee broght a ring;
My moder yaf it me, so god me save,
Ful fyn it is, and ther-to wel y-grave;
This wol I yeve thee, if thou me kisse!'
This Nicholas was risen for to pisse,
And thoghte he wolde amenden al the Iape,
He sholde kisse his ers er that he scape.
And up the windowe dide he hastily
And out his ers he putteth prively
Over the buttok, to the haunche-bon;
And ther-with spak this clerk, this Absolon,
'Spek, swete brid, I noot nat wher thou art.'
This Nicholas anon leet flee a fart,
As greet as it had been a thonder-dent,
That with the strook he was almost y-blent;
And he was redy with his iren hoot,
And Nicholas amidde the ers he smoot.
Of gooth the skin an hande-brede aboute,
The hote culter brende so his toute,
And for the smert he wende for to dye.
As he were wood, for wo he gan to crye—
'Help! water! water! help, for goddes herte!'
This carpenter out of his slomber sterte,
And herde oon cryen 'water' as he were wood,
And thoghte, 'Allas! now comth Nowelis flood!'
He sit him up with-outen wordes mo,
And with his ax he smoot the corde a-two,
And doun goth al; he fond neither to selle,
Ne breed ne ale, til he cam to the selle
Upon the floor; and ther aswowne he lay.
Up sterte hir Alison, and Nicholay,
And cryden 'out' and 'harrow' in the strete.
The neighebores, bothe smale and grete,
In ronnen, for to gauren on this man,
That yet aswowne he lay, bothe pale and wan;
For with the fal he brosten hadde his arm;

But stonde he moste un-to his owne harm.
For whan he spak, he was anon bore doun
With hende Nicholas and Alisoun.
They tolden every man that he was wood,
He was agast so of 'Nowelis flood'
Thurgh fantasye, that of his vanitee
He hadde y-boght him kneding-tubbes three,
And hadde hem hanged in the roof above;
And that he preyed hem, for goddes love,
To sitten in the roof, *par companye.*
The folk gan laughan at his fantasye;
In-to the roof they kyken and they gape,
And turned al his harm un-to a Iape.
For what so that this carpenter answerde,
It was for noght, no man his reson herde;
With othes grete he was so sworn adoun,
That he was holden wood in al the toun;
For every clerk anon-right heeld with other.
They seyde, 'the man is wood, my leve brother;'
And every wight gan laughen of this stryf.
Thus swyved was the carpenteres wyf,
For al his keping and his Ialousye;
And Absolon hath kist hir nether yë;
And Nicholas is scalded in the toute.
This tale is doon, and god save al the route!

Here endeth the Millere his tale.

THE REEVE'S PROLOGUE.

The prologe of the Reves tale.

WHAN folk had laughen at this nyce cas
Of Absolon and hende Nicholas,
Diverse folk diversely they seyde;
But, for the more part, they loughe and pleyde,
Ne at this tale I saugh no man him greve,
But it were only Osewold the Reve,
By-cause he was of carpenteres craft.
A litel ire is in his herte y-laft.
He gan to grucche and blamed it a lyte.
'So theek,' quod he, 'ful wel coude I yow quyte
With blering of a proud milleres yë,
If that me liste speke of ribaudye.
But ik am old, me list not pley for age;
Gras-tyme is doon, my fodder is now forage,
This whyte top wryteth myne olde yeres,
Myn herte is al-so mowled as myne heres,
But-if I fare as dooth an open-ers;
That ilke fruit is ever leng the wers,
Til it be roten in mullok or in stree.
We olde men, I drede, so fare we;
Til we be roten, can we nat be rype;
We hoppen ay, whyl that the world wol pype.
For in oure wil ther stiketh ever a nayl,
To have an hoor heed and a grene tayl,
As hath a leek; for thogh our might be goon,
Our wil desireth folie ever in oon.
For whan we may nat doon, than wol we speke;
Yet in our asshen olde is fyr y-reke.
Foure gledes han we, whiche I shal devyse,
Avaunting, lying, anger, coveityse;
Thise foure sparkles longen un-to elde.
Our olde lemes mowe wel been unwelde,
But wil ne shal nat faillen, that is sooth.
And yet ik have alwey a coltes tooth,
As many a yeer as it is passed henne
Sin that my tappe of lyf bigan to renne.
For sikerly, whan I was bore, anon
Deeth drogh the tappe of lyf and leet it gon;
And ever sith hath so the tappe y-ronne,
Til that almost al empty is the tonne.
The streem of lyf now droppeth on the chimbe;
The sely tonge may wel ringe and chimbe
Of wrecchednesse that passed is ful yore;
With olde folk, save dotage, is namore.'
Whan that our host hadde herd this sermoning,

He gan to speke as lordly as a king;
He seide, 'what amounteth al this wit?
What shul we speke alday of holy writ?
The devel made a reve for to preche,
And of a souter a shipman or a leche.
Sey forth thy tale, and tarie nat the tyme,
Lo, Depeford! and it is half-way pryme.
Lo, Grenewich, ther many a shrewe is inne;
It were al tyme thy tale to biginne.'
'Now, sires,' quod this Osewold the Reve,
'I pray yow alle that ye nat yow greve,
Thogh I answere and somdel sette his howve;
For leveful is with force force of-showve.
This dronke millere hath y-told us heer,
How that bigyled was a carpenteer,
Peraventure in scorn, for I am oon.
And, by your leve, I shal him quyte anoon;
Right in his cherles termes wol I speke.
I pray to god his nekke mote breke;
He can wel in myn yë seen a stalke,
But in his owne he can nat seen a balke.

THE REVES TALE.

Here biginneth the Reves tale.

At Trumpington, nat fer fro Cantebrigge,
Ther goth a brook and over that a brigge,
Up-on the whiche brook ther stant a melle;
And this is verray soth that I yow telle.
A Miller was ther dwelling many a day;
As eny pecok he was proud and gay.
Pypen he coude and fisshe, and nettes bete,
And turne coppes, and wel wrastle and shete;
And by his belt he baar a long panade,
And of a swerd ful trenchant was the blade.
A Ioly popper baar he in his pouche;
Ther was no man for peril dorste him touche.
A Sheffeld thwitel baar he in his hose;
Round was his face, and camuse was his nose.
As piled as an ape was his skulle.
He was a market-beter atte fulle.
Ther dorste no wight hand up-on him legge,
That he ne swoor he sholde anon abegge.
A theef he was for sothe of corn and mele,
And that a sly, and usaunt for to stele.
His name was hoten dëynous Simkin.
A wyf he hadde, y-comen of noble kin;
The person of the toun hir fader was.
With hir he yaf ful many a panne of bras,
For that Simkin sholde in his blood allye.
She was y-fostred in a nonnerye;
For Simkin wolde no wyf, as he sayde,
But she were well y-norissed and a mayde,
To saven his estaat of yomanrye.
And she was proud, and pert as is a pye.
A ful fair sighte was it on hem two;
On haly-dayes biforn hir wolde he go
With his tipet bounden about his heed,
And she cam after in a gyte of reed;
And Simkin hadde hosen of the same.
Ther dorste no wight clepen hir but 'dame.'
Was noon so hardy that wente by the weye
That with hir dorste rage or ones pleye,
But-if he wolde be slayn of Simkin
With panade, or with knyf, or boydekin.
For lalous folk ben perilous evermo,
Algate they wolde hir wyves wenden so.
And eek, for she was somdel smoterlich,
She was as digne as water in a dich;

And ful of hoker and of bisemare.
Hir thoughte that a lady sholde hir spare,
What for hir kinrede and hir nortelrye
That she had lerned in the nonnerye.
A doghter hadde they bitwixe hem two
Of twenty yeer, with-outen any mo,
Savinge a child that was of half-yeer age;
In cradel it lay and was a propre page.
This wenche thikke and wel y-growen was,
With camuse nose and yën greye as glas;
With buttokes brode and brestes rounde and hye,
But right fair was hir heer, I wol nat lye.
The person of the toun, for she was feir,
In purpos was to maken hir his heir
Bothe of his catel and his messuage,
And straunge he made it of hir mariage.
His purpos was for to bistowe hir hye
In-to som worthy blood of auncetrye;
For holy chirches good moot been despended
On holy chirches blood, that is descended.
Therfore he wolde his holy blood honoure,
Though that he holy chirche sholde devoure.
Gret soken hath this miller, out of doute,
With whete and malt of al the land aboute;
And nameliche ther was a greet collegge,
Men clepen the Soler-halle at Cantebregge,
Ther was hir whete and eek hir malt y-grounde.
And on a day it happed, in a stounde,
Sik lay the maunciple on a maladye;
Men wenden wisly that he sholde dye.
For which this miller stal bothe mele and corn
An hundred tyme more than biforn;
For ther-biforn he stal but curteisly,
But now he was a theef outrageously,
For which the wardeyn chidde and made fare.
But ther-of sette the miller nat a tare;
He craketh boost, and swoor it was nat so.
Than were ther yonge povre clerkes two,
That dwelten in this halle, of which I seye.
Testif they were, and lusty for to pleye,
And, only for hir mirthe and revelrye,
Up-on the wardeyn bisily they crye,
To yeve hem leve but a litel stounde
To goon to mille and seen hir corn y-grounde;
And hardily, they dorste leye hir nekke,
The miller shold nat stele hem half a pekke
Of corn by sleighte, ne by force hem reve;
And at the laste the wardeyn yaf hem leve.
Iohn hight that oon, and Aleyn hight that other;
Of o toun were they born, that highte Strother,
Fer in the north, I can nat telle where.
This Aleyn maketh redy al his gere,
And on an hors the sak he caste anon.
Forth goth Aleyn the clerk, and also Iohn,
With good swerd and with bokeler by hir syde.
Iohn knew the wey, hem nededе no gyde,
And at the mille the sak adoun he layth.
Aleyn spak first, 'al hayl, Symond, y-fayth;
How fares thy faire doghter and thy wyf?'
'Aleyn! welcome,' quod Simkin, 'by my lyf,
And Iohn also, how now, what do ye heer?'
'Symond,' quod Iohn, 'by god, nede has na peer;
Him boës serve him-selve that has na swayn,
Or elles he is a fool, as clerkes sayn.
Our manciple, I hope he wil be deed,
Swa werkes ay the wanges in his heed.
And forthy is I come, and eek Alayn,
To grinde our corn and carie it ham agayn;
I pray yow spede us hethen that ye may.'

'It shal be doon,' quod Simkin, 'by my fay;
What wol ye doon whyl that it is in hande?'
'By god, right by the hoper wil I stande,'
Quod Iohn, 'and se how that the corn gas in;
Yet saugh I never, by my fader kin,
How that the hoper wagges til and fra.'
Aleyn answerde, 'Iohn, and wiltow swa,
Than wil I be bynethe, by my croun,
And se how that the mele falles doun
In-to the trough; that sal be my disport.
For Iohn, in faith, I may been of your sort;
I is as ille a miller as are ye.'
This miller smyled of hir nycetee,
And thoghte, 'al this nis doon but for a wyle;
They wene that no man may hem bigyle;
But, by my thrift, yet shal I blere hir yë
For al the sleighte in hir philosophye.
The more queynte crekes that they make,
The more wol I stele whan I take.
In stede of flour, yet wol I yeve hem bren.
"The gretteste clerkes been noght the wysest men,"
As whylom to the wolf thus spak the mare;
Of al hir art I counte noght a tare.'
Out at the dore he gooth ful prively,
Whan that he saugh his tyme, softely;
He loketh up and doun til he hath founde
The clerkes hors, ther as it stood y-bounde
Bihinde the mille, under a levesel;
And to the hors he gooth him faire and wel;
He strepeth of the brydel right anon.
And whan the hors was loos, he ginneth gon
Toward the fen, ther wilde mares renne,
Forth with wehee, thurgh thikke and thurgh thenne.
This miller gooth agayn, no word he seyde,
But dooth his note, and with the clerkes pleyde,
Til that hir corn was faire and wel y-grounde.
And whan the mele is sakked and y-bounde,
This Iohn goth out and fynt his hors away,
And gan to crye 'harrow' and 'weylaway!
Our hors is lorn! Alayn, for goddes banes,
Step on thy feet, com out, man, al at anes!
Allas, our wardeyn has his palfrey lorn.'
This Aleyn al forgat, bothe mele and corn,
Al was out of his mynde his housbondrye.
'What? whilk way is he geen?' he gan to crye.
The wyf cam leping inward with a ren,
She seyde, 'allas! your hors goth to the fen
With wilde mares, as faste as he may go.
Unthank come on his hand that bond him so,
And he that bettre sholde han knit the reyne.'
'Allas,' quod Iohn, 'Aleyn, for Cristes peyne,
Lay doun thy swerd, and I wil myn alswa;
I is ful wight, god waat, as is a raa;
By goddes herte he sal nat scape us bathe.
Why nadstow pit the capul in the lathe?
Il-hayl, by god, Aleyn, thou is a fonne!'
This sely clerkes han ful faste y-ronne
To-ward the fen, bothe Aleyn and eek Iohn
And whan the miller saugh that they were gon,
He half a busshel of hir flour hath take,
And bad his wyf go knede it in a cake.
He seyde, 'I trowe the clerkes were aferd;
Yet can a miller make a clerkes berd
For al his art; now lat hem goon hir weye.
Lo wher they goon, ye, lat the children pleye;

They gete him nat so lightly, by my croun!'
Thise sely clerkes rennen up and doun
With 'keep, keep, stand, stand, Iossa, warderere,
Ga whistle thou, and I shal kepe him here!'
But shortly, til that it was verray night,
They coude nat, though they do al hir might,
Hir capul cacche, he ran alwey so faste,
Til in a dich they caughte him atte laste.
Wery and weet, as beste is in the reyn,
Comth sely Iohn, and with him comth Aleyn.
'Allas,' quod Iohn, 'the day that I was born!
Now are we drive til hething and til scorn.
Our corn is stole, men wil us foles calle,
Bathe the wardeyn and our felawes alle,
And namely the miller; weylaway!'
Thus pleyneth Iohn as he goth by the way
Toward the mille, and Bayard in his hond.
The miller sitting by the fyr he fond,
For it was night, and forther mighte they noght;
But, for the love of god, they him bisoght
Of herberwe and of ese, as for hir peny.
The miller seyde agayn, 'if ther be eny,
Swich as it is, yet shal ye have your part.
Myn hous is streit, but ye han lerned art;
Ye conne by argumentes make a place
A myle brood of twenty foot of space.
Lat see now if this place may suffyse,
Or make it roum with speche, as is youre gyse.'
'Now, Symond,' seyde Iohn, 'by seint Cutberd,
Ay is thou mery, and this is faire answerd.
I have herd seyd, man sal taa of twa thinges
Slyk as he fyndes, or taa slyk as he bringes.
But specially, I pray thee, hoste dere,
Get us som mete and drinke, and make us chere,
And we wil payen trewely atte fulle.
With empty hand men may na haukes tulle;
Lo here our silver, redy for to spende.'
This miller in-to toun his doghter sende
For ale and breed, and rosted hem a goos,
And bond hir hors, it sholde nat gon loos;
And in his owne chambre hem made a bed
With shetes and with chalons faire y-spred,
Noght from his owne bed ten foot or twelve.
His doghter hadde a bed, al by hir-selve,
Right in the same chambre, by and by;
It mighte be no bet, and cause why,
Ther was no roumer herberwe in the place.
They soupen and they speke, hem to solace,
And drinken ever strong ale atte beste.
Aboute midnight wente they to reste.
Wel hath this miller vernisshed his heed;
Ful pale he was for-dronken, and nat reed.
He yexeth, and he speketh thurgh the nose
As he were on the quakke, or on the pose.
To bedde he gooth, and with him goth his wyf.
As any Iay she light was and Iolyf,
So was hir Ioly whistle wel y-wet.
The cradel at hir beddes feet is set,
To rokken, and to yeve the child to souke.
And whan that dronken al was in the crouke,
To bedde went the doghter right anon;
To bedde gooth Aleyn and also Iohn;
Ther nas na more, hem nedede no dwale.
This miller hath so wisly bidded ale,
That as an hors he snorteth in his sleep,
Ne of his tayl bihinde he took no keep.
His wyf bar him a burdon, a ful strong,
Men mighte hir routing here two furlong;

The wenche routeth eek *par companye.*
Aleyn the clerk, that herd this melodye,
He poked Iohn, and seyde, 'slepestow?
Herdestow ever slyk a sang er now? 4170
Lo, whilk a compline is y-mel hem alle!
A wilde fyr up-on thair bodyes falle!
Wha herkened ever slyk a ferly thing?
Ye, they sal have the flour of il ending.
This lange night ther tydes me na reste; 4175
But yet, na fors; al sal be for the beste.
For Iohn,' seyde he, 'als ever moot I thryve,
If that I may, yon wenche wil I swyve.
Som esement has lawe y-shapen us;
For Iohn, ther is a lawe that says thus, 4180
That gif a man in a point be y-greved,
That in another he sal be releved.
Our corn is stoln, shortly, it is na nay,
And we han had an il fit al this day.
And sin I sal have neen amendement, 4185
Agayn my los I wil have esement.
By goddes saule, it sal neen other be!'
This Iohn answerde, 'Alayn, avyse thee,
The miller is a perilous man,' he seyde,
'And gif that he out of his sleep abreyde, 4190
He mighte doon us bathe a vileinye.'
Aleyn answerde, 'I count him nat a flye;'
And up he rist, and by the wenche he crepte.
This wenche lay upright, and faste slepte,
Til he so ny was, er she mighte espye, 4195
That it had been to late for to crye,
And shortly for to seyn, they were at on;
Now pley, Aleyn! for I wol speke of Iohn.
This Iohn lyth stille a furlong-wey or two,
And to him-self he maketh routhe and wo: 4200
'Allas!' quod he, 'this is a wikked Iape;
Now may I seyn that I is but an ape.
Yet has my felawe som-what for his harm;
He has the milleris doghter in his arm.
He auntred him, and has his nedes sped,
And I lye as a draf-sek in my bed; 4206
And when this Iape is tald another day,
I sal been halde a daf, a cokenay!
I wil aryse, and auntre it, by my fayth!
"Unhardy is unsely," thus men sayth.' 4210
And up he roos and softely he wente
Un-to the cradel, and in his hand it hente,
And baar it softe un-to his beddes feet.
Sone after this the wyf hir routing leet,
And gan awake, and wente hir out to pisse, 4215
And gam agayn, and gan hir cradel misse,
And groped heer and ther, but she fond noon.
'Allas!' quod she, 'I hadde almost misgoon;
I hadde almost gon to the clerkes bed.
Ey, *benedicite!* thanne hadde I foule y-sped:' 4220
And forth she gooth til she the cradel fond.
She gropeth alwey forther with hir hond,
And fond the bed, and thoghte noght but good,
By-cause that the cradel by it stood,
And niste wher she was, for it was derk; 4225
But faire and wel she creep in to the clerk,
And lyth ful stille, and wolde han caught a sleep.
With-inne a whyl this Iohn the clerk up leep,
And on this gode wyf he leyth on sore.
So mery a fit ne hadde she nat ful yore; 4230
He priketh harde and depe as he were mad.
This Ioly lyf han thise two clerkes lad
Til that the thridde cok bigan to singe.
Aleyn wex wery in the daweninge,
For he had swonken al the longe night; 4235
And seyde, 'far wel, Malin, swete wight!
The day is come, I may no lenger byde;
But evermo, wher so I go or ryde,
I is thyn awen clerk, swa have I seel!'
'Now dere lemman,' quod she, 'go, far weel! 4240
But er thou go, o thing I wol thee telle,
Whan that thou wendest homward by the melle,

Right at the entree of the dore bihinde,
Thou shalt a cake of half a busshel finde
That was y-maked of thyn owne mele,
Which that I heelp my fader for to stele.
And, gode lemman, god thee save and kepe!'
And with that word almost she gan to wepe.
Aleyn up-rist, and thoughte, 'er that it dawe,
I wol go crepen in by my felawe;'
And fond the cradel with his hand anon,
'By god,' thoghte he, 'al wrang I have misgon;
Myn heed is toty of my swink to-night,
That maketh me that I go nat aright.
I woot wel by the cradel, I have misgo,
Heer lyth the miller and his wyf also.'
And forth he goth, a twenty devel way,
Un-to the bed ther-as the miller lay.
He wende have cropen by his felawe Iohn;
And by the miller in he creep anon,
And caughte hym by the nekke, and softe he spak:
He seyde, 'thou, Iohn, thou swynes-heed, awak
For Cristes saule, and heer a noble game.
For by that lord that called is seint Iame,
As I have thryes, in this shorte night,
Swyved the milleres doghter bolt-upright,
Whyl thow hast as a coward been agast.'
'Ye, false harlot,' quod the miller, 'hast?
A! false traitour! false clerk!' quod he,
'Thou shalt be deed, by goddes dignitee!
Who dorste be so bold to disparage
My doghter, that is come of swich linage?'
And by the throte-bolle he caughte Alayn.
And he hente hym despitously agayn,
And on the nose he smoot him with his fest.
Doun ran the blody streem up-on his brest;
And in the floor, with nose and mouth to-broke,
They walwe as doon two pigges in a poke.
And up they goon, and doun agayn anon,
Til that the miller sporned at a stoon,
And doun he fil bakward up-on his wyf,
That wiste no-thing of this nyce stryf;
For she was falle aslepe a lyte wight
With Iohn the clerk, that waked hedde al night.
And with the fal, out of hir sleep she breyde—
'Help, holy croys of Bromeholm,' she seyde,
In manus tuas! lord, to thee I calle!
Awak, Symond! the feend is on us falle,
Myn herte is broken, help, I nam but deed;
There lyth oon up my wombe and up myn heed;
Help, Simkin, for the false clerkes fighte.'
This Iohn sterte up as faste as ever he mighte,
And graspeth by the walles to and fro,
To finde a staf; and she sterte up also,
And knew the estres bet than dide this Iohn,
And by the wal a staf she fond anon,
And saugh a litel shimering of a light,
For at an hole in shoon the mone bright;
And by that light she saugh hem bothe two,
But sikerly she niste who was who,
But as she saugh a whyt thing in hir yë.
And whan she gan the whyte thing espye,
She wende the clerk hadde wered a volupeer.
And with the staf she drough ay neer and neer,
And wende han hit this Aleyn at the fulle,
And smoot the miller on the pyled skulle,
That doun he gooth and cryde, 'harrow! I dye!'
Thise clerkes bete him weel and lete him lye;
And greythen hem, and toke hir hors anon,
And eek hir mele, and on hir wey they gon.
And at the mille yet they toke hir cake
Of half a busshel flour, ful wel y-bake.

Thus is the proude miller wel y-bete,
And hath y-lost the grinding of the whete,
And payed for the soper every-deel
Of Aleyn and of Iohn, that bette him weel.
His wyf is swyved, and his doghter als;
Lo, swich it is a miller to be fals!
And therfore this proverbe is seyd ful sooth,
'Him thar nat wene wel that yvel dooth;
A gylour shal him-self bigyled be.'
And God, that sitteth heighe in magestee,
Save al this companye grete and smale!
Thus have I quit the miller in my tale.

Here is ended the Reves tale.

THE COOK'S PROLOGUE.

The prologe of the Cokes Tale.

THE Cook of London, whyl the Reve spak,
For Ioye, him thoughte, he clawed him on the bak,
'Ha! ha!' quod he, 'for Cristes passioun,
This miller hadde a sharp conclusioun
Upon his argument of herbergage!
Wel seyde Salomon in his langage,
"Ne bringe nat every man in-to thyn hous;"
For herberwing by nighte is perilous.
Wel oghte a man avysed for to be
Whom that he broghte in-to his privetee.
I pray to god, so yeve me sorwe and care,
If ever, sith I highte Hogge of Ware,
Herde I a miller bettre y-set a-werk.
He hadde a Iape of malice in the derk.
But god forbede that we stinten here;
And therfore, if ye vouche-sauf to here
A tale of me, that am a povre man,
I wol yow telle as wel as ever I can
A litel Iape that fil in our citee.'
Our host answerde, and seide, 'I graunte it thee;
Now telle on, Roger, loke that it be good;
For many a pastee hastow laten blood,
And many a Iakke of Dover hastow sold
That hath been twyes hoot and twyes cold.
Of many a pilgrim hastow Cristes curs,
For of thy persly yet they fare the wors,
That they han eten with thy stubbel-goos;
For in thy shoppe is many a flye loos.
Now telle on, gentil Roger, by thy name.
But yet I pray thee, be nat wrooth for game,
A man may seye ful sooth in game and pley.'
'Thou seist ful sooth,' quod Roger, 'by my fey,
But "sooth pley, quaad pley," as the Fleming seith;
And ther-fore, Herry Bailly, by thy feith,
Be thou nat wrooth, er we departen heer,
Though that my tale be of an hostileer.
But nathelees I wol nat telle it yit,
But er we parte, y-wis, thou shalt be quit.'
And ther-with-al he lough and made chere,
And seyde his tale, as ye shul after here.

Thus endeth the Prologe of the Cokes tale.

THE COKES TALE.

Heer bigynneth the Cokes tale.

A PRENTIS whylom dwelled in our citee,
And of a craft of vitaillers was he;
Gaillard he was as goldfinch in the shawe,
Broun as a berie, a propre short felawe,
With lokkes blake, y-kempt ful fetisly.
Dauncen he coude so wel and lolily,
That he was cleped Perkin Revelour.
He was as ful of love and paramour
As is the hyve ful of hony swete;
Wel was the wenche with him mighte mete.
At every brydale wolde he singe and hoppe,
He loved bet the taverne than the shoppe.
For whan ther any ryding was in Chepe,
Out of the shoppe thider wolde he lepe.
Til that he hadde al the sighte y-seyn,
And daunced wel, he wolde nat come ageyn.
And gadered him a meinee of his sort
To hoppe and singe, and maken swich disport.
And ther they setten steven for to mete
To pleyen at the dys in swich a strete.
For in the toune nas ther no prentys,
That fairer coude caste a paire of dys
Than Perkin coude, and ther-to he was free
Of his dispense, in place of privetee.
That fond his maister wel in his chaffare;
For often tyme he fond his box ful bare.
For sikerly a prentis revelour,
That haunteth dys, riot, or paramour,
His maister shal it in his shoppe abye,
Al have he no part of the minstralcye;
For thefte and riot, they ben convertible,
Al conne he pleye on giterne or ribible.
Revel and trouthe, as in a low degree,
They been ful wrothe al day, as men may see.
This Ioly prentis with his maister bood,
Til he were ny out of his prentishood,
Al were he snibbed bothe erly and late,
And somtyme lad with revel to Newgate;
But atte laste his maister him bithoghte,
Up-on a day, whan he his paper soghte,
Of a proverbe that seith this same word,
'Wel bet is roten appel out of hord
Than that it rotie al the remenaunt.'
So fareth it by a riotous servaunt;
It is wel lasse harm to lete him pace,
Than he shende alle the servants in the place.
Therfore his maister yaf him acquitance,
And bad him go with sorwe and with meschance;
And thus this Ioly prentis hadde his leve.
Now lat him riote al the night or leve.
And for ther is no theef with-oute a louke,
That helpeth him to wasten and to souke
Of that he brybe can or borwe may,
Anon he sente his bed and his array
Un-to a compeer of his owne sort,
That lovede dys and revel and disport,
And hadde a wyf that heeld for countenance
A shoppe, and swyved for hir sustenance.

* * * * * *

Of this Cokes tale maked Chaucer na more.

[*For* The Tale of Gamelin, *see the* Appendix.]

GROUP B.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MAN OF LAW'S PROLOGUE.

The wordes of the Hoost to the companye.

Our Hoste sey wel that the brighte sonne
The ark of his artificial day had ronne
The fourthe part, and half an houre, and more;
And though he were not depe expert in lore,
He wiste it was the eightetethe day
Of April, that is messager to May;
And sey wel that the shadwe of every tree
Was as in lengthe the same quantitee
That was the body erect that caused it.
And therfor by the shadwe he took his wit
That Phebus, which that shoon so clere and brighte,
Degrees was fyve and fourty clombe on highte;
And for that day, as in that latitude,
It was ten of the clokke, he gan conclude,
And sodeynly he plighte his hors aboute.
'Lordinges,' quod he, 'I warne yow, al this route,
The fourthe party of this day is goon;
Now, for the love of god and of seint Iohn,
Leseth no tyme, as ferforth as ye may;
Lordinges, the tyme wasteth night and day,
And steleth from us, what prively slepinge,
And what thurgh necligence in our wakinge,
As dooth the streem, that turneth never agayn,
Descending fro the montaigne in-to playn.
Wel can Senek, and many a philosophre
Biwailen tyme, more than gold in cofre.
"For los of catel may recovered be,
But los of tyme shendeth us," quod he.
It wol nat come agayn, with-outen drede,
Na more than wol Malkins maydenhede,
Whan she hath lost it in hir wantownesse;
Lat us nat moulen thus in ydelnesse.
'Sir man of lawe,' quod he, 'so have ye blis,
Tel us a tale anon, as forward is;
Ye been submitted thurgh your free assent
To stonde in this cas at my Iugement.
Acquiteth yow, and holdeth your biheste,
Than have ye doon your devoir atte leste.'
'Hoste,' quod he, '*depardieux* ich assente,
To breke forward is not myn entente.
Biheste is dette, and I wol holde fayn
Al my biheste; I can no better seyn.
For swich lawe as man yeveth another wight,
He sholde him-selven usen it by right;
Thus wol our text; but natheles certeyn
I can right now no thrifty tale seyn,
But Chaucer, though he can but lewedly
On metres and on ryming craftily,
Hath seyd hem in swich English as he can
Of olde tyme, as knoweth many a man.
And if he have not seyd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath seyd hem in another.
For he hath told of loveres up and doun
Mo than Ovyde made of mencioun
In his Epistelles, that been ful olde.
What sholde I tellen hem, sin they ben tolde?
In youthe he made of Ceys and Alcion,
And sithen hath he spoke of everichon,
Thise noble wyves and thise loveres eke.
Who-so that wol his large volume seke
Cleped the Seintes Legende of Cupyde,
Ther may he seen the large woundes wyde
Of Lucresse, and of Babilan Tisbee;
The swerd of Dido for the false Enee;
The tree of Phillis for hir Demophon;
The pleinte of Dianire and Hermion,
Of Adriane and of Isiphilee;

The bareyne yle stonding in the see;
The dreynte Leander for his Erro;
The teres of Eleyne, and eek the wo
Of Brixseyde, and of thee, Ladomëa;
The crueltee of thee, queen Medëa,
Thy litel children hanging by the hals
For thy Iason, that was of love so fals!
O Ypermistra, Penelopee, Alceste,
Your wyfhod he comendeth with the beste!
But certeinly no word ne wryteth he
Of thilke wikke ensample of Canacee,
That lovede hir owne brother sinfully;
Of swiche cursed stories I sey 'fy';
Or elles of Tyro Apollonius,
How that the cursed king Antiochus
Birafte his doghter of hir maydenhede,
That is so horrible a tale for to rede,
Whan he hir threw up-on the pavement.
And therfor he, of ful avysement,
Nolde never wryte in none of his sermouns
Of swiche unkinde abhominaciouns,
Ne I wol noon reherse, if that I may.
But of my tale how shal I doon this day?
Me were looth be lykned, doutelees,
To Muses that men clepe Pierides—
Metamorphoseos wot what I mene:—
But nathelees, I recche noght a bene
Though I come after him with hawe-bake;
I speke in prose, and lat him rymes make.'
And with that word he, with a sobre chere,
Bigan his tale, as ye shal after here.

THE PROLOGE OF THE MANNES TALE OF LAWE.

O HATEFUL harm! condicion of poverte!
With thurst, with cold, with hunger so confounded!
To asken help thee shameth in thyn herte;
If thou noon aske, with nede artow so wounded,
That verray nede unwrappeth al thy wounde hid!
Maugree thyn heed, thou most for indigence
Or stele, or begge, or borwe thy despence!

Thou blamest Crist, and seyst ful bitterly,
He misdeparteth richesse temporal;
Thy neighebour thou wytest sinfully,
And seyst thou hast to lyte, and he hath al.
'Parfay,' seistow, 'somtyme he rekne shal,
Whan that his tayl shal brennen in the glede,
For he noght helpeth needfulle in hir nede.'

Herkne what is the sentence of the wyse:—
'Bet is to dyën than have indigence;'
'Thy selve neighebour wol thee despyse;'
If thou be povre, farwel thy reverence!
Yet of the wyse man tak this sentence:—
'Alle the dayes of povre men ben wikke;'
Be war therfor, er thou come in that prikke!

'If thou be povre, thy brother hateth thee,
And alle thy freendes fleen fro thee, alas!'
O riche marchaunts, ful of wele ben ye,
O noble, o prudent folk, as in this cas!
Your bagges been nat filled with *ambes as*,
But with *sis cink*, than renneth for your chaunce;
At Cristemasse merie may ye daunce!

Ye seken lond and see for your winninges,
As wyse folk ye knowen al thestaat
Of regnes; ye ben fadres of tydinges
And tales, bothe of pees and of debat.
I were right now of tales desolat,
Nere that a marchaunt, goon is many a yere,
Me taughte a tale, which that ye shal here.

THE TALE OF THE MAN OF LAWE.

Here beginneth the Man of Lawe his Tale.

In Surrie whylom dwelte a companye
Of chapmen riche, and therto sadde and trewe,
That wyde-wher senten her spycerye,
Clothes of gold, and satins riche of hewe;
Her chaffar was so thrifty and so newe,
That every wight hath deyntee to chaffare
With hem, and eek to sellen hem hir ware.

Now fel it, that the maistres of that sort
Han shapen hem to Rome for to wende;
Were it for chapmanhode or for disport,
Non other message wolde they thider sende,
But comen hem-self to Rome, this is the ende;
And in swich place, as thoughte hem avantage
For her entente, they take her herbergage.

Soiourned han thise marchants in that toun
A certein tyme, as fel to hir plesance.
And so bifel, that thexcellent renoun
Of themperoures doghter, dame Custance,
Reported was, with every circumstance,
Un-to thise Surrien marchants in swich wyse,
Fro day to day, as I shal yow devyse.

This was the commune vois of every man—
'Our Emperour of Rome, god him see,
A doghter hath that, sin the world bigan,
To rekne as wel hir goodnesse as beautee,
Nas never swich another as is she;
I prey to god in honour hir sustene,
And wolde she were of al Europe the quene.

In hir is heigh beautee, with-oute pryde,
Yowthe, with-oute grenehede or folye;
To alle hir werkes vertu is hir gyde,
Humblesse hath slayn in hir al tirannye.
She is mirour of alle curteisye;
Hir herte is verray chambre of holinesse,
Hir hand, ministre of fredom for almesse.'

And al this vois was soth, as god is trewe,
But now to purpos lat us turne agayn;
Thise marchants han doon fraught hir shippes newe,
And, whan they han this blisful mayden seyn,
Hoom to Surryë been they went ful fayn,
And doon her nedes as they han don yore,
And liven in wele; I can sey yow no more.

Now fel it, that thise marchants stode in grace
Of him, that was the sowdan of Surrye;
For whan they came from any strange place,
He wolde, of his benigne curteisye,
Make hem good chere, and bisily espye
Tydings of sondry regnes, for to lere
The wondres that they mighte seen or here.

Amonges othere thinges, specially
Thise marchants han him told of dame Custance,
So gret noblesse in ernest, ceriously,
That this sowdan hath caught so gret plesance
To han hir figure in his remembrance,
That al his lust and al his bisy cure
Was for to love hir whyl his lyf may dure.

Paraventure in thilke large book
Which that men clepe the heven, y-writen was
With sterres, whan that he his birthe took,
That he for love shulde han his deeth, allas!
For in the sterres, clerer than is glas,

Is writen, god wot, who-so coude it rede,
The deeth of every man, withouten drede.

In sterres, many a winter ther-biforn,
Was writen the deeth of Ector, Achilles,
Of Pompey, Iulius, er they were born;
The stryf of Thebes; and of Ercules,
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The deeth; but mennes wittes been so dulle,
That no wight can wel rede it atte fulle.

This sowdan for his privee conseil sente,
And, shortly of this mater for to pace,
He hath to hem declared his entente,
And seyde hem certein, 'but he mighte have grace
To han Custance with-inne a litel space,
He nas but deed;' and charged hem, in hye,
To shapen for his lyf som remedye.

Diverse men diverse thinges seyden;
They argumenten, casten up and doun;
Many a subtil resoun forth they leyden,
They speken of magik and abusioun;
But finally, as in conclusioun,
They can not seen in that non avantage,
Ne in non other wey, save mariage.

Than sawe they ther-in swich difficultee
By wey of resoun, for to speke al playn
By-cause that ther was swich diversitee
Bitwene hir bothe lawes, that they sayn,
They trowe 'that no Cristen prince wolde fayn
Wedden his child under oure lawes swete
That us were taught by Mahoun our prophete.'

And he answerde, 'rather than I lese
Custance, I wol be cristned doutelees;
I mot ben hires, I may non other chese.
I prey yow holde your arguments in pees;
Saveth my lyf, and beeth noght recchelees
To geten hir that hath my lyf in cure;
For in this wo I may not longe endure.'

What nedeth gretter dilatacioun?
I seye, by tretis and embassadrye,
And by the popes mediacioun,
And al the chirche, and al the chivalrye,
That, in destruccioun of Maumetrye,
And in encrees of Cristes lawe dere,
They ben acorded, so as ye shal here;

How that the sowdan and his baronage
And alle his liges shulde y-cristned be,
And he shal han Custance in mariage,
And certein gold, I noot what quantitee,
And her-to founden suffisant seurtee;
This same acord was sworn on eyther syde;
Now, faire Custance, almighty god thee gyde!

Now wolde som men waiten, as I gesse,
That I shulde tellen al the purveyance
That themperour, of his grete noblesse,
Hath shapen for his doghter dame Custance.
Wel may men knowe that so gret ordinance
May no man tellen in a litel clause
As was arrayed for so heigh a cause.

Bisshopes ben shapen with hir for to wende,
Lordes, ladyes, knightes of renoun,
And other folk y-nowe, this is the ende;
And notifyed is thurgh-out the toun
That every wight, with gret devocioun,
Shulde preyen Crist that he this mariage
Receyve in gree, and spede this viage.

The day is comen of hir departinge,
I sey, the woful day fatal is come,
That ther may be no lenger taryinge,
But forthward they hem dressen, alle and some;
Custance, that was with sorwe al overcome,
Ful pale arist, and dresseth hir to wende;
For wel she seeth ther is non other ende.

Allas! what wonder is it though she wepte,
That shal be sent to strange nacioun
Fro freendes, that so tendrely hir kepte,

And to be bounden under subiec-
cioun
Of oon, she knoweth not his condicioun.
Housbondes been alle gode, and han ben
yore,
That knowen wyves, I dar say yow no
more.

'Fader,' she sayde, 'thy wrecched child
Custance,
Thy yonge doghter, fostred up so softe,
And ye, my moder, my soverayn plesance
Over alle thing, out-taken Crist on-loíte,
Custance, your child, hir recomandeth
ofte
Un-to your grace, for I shal to Surryë,
Ne shal I never seen yow more with
yë.

Allas! un-to the Barbre nacioun
I moste anon, sin that it is your wille;
But Crist, that starf for our redempcioun,
So yeve me grace, his hestes to fulfille;
I, wrecche womman, no fors though I
spille.
Wommen are born to thraldom and
penance,
And to ben under mannes governance.'

I trowe, at Troye, whan Pirrus brak the
wal
Or Ylíon brende, at Thebes the citee,
Nat Rome, for the harm thurgh Hanibal
That Romayns hath venquisshed tymes
thre,
Nas herd swich tendre weping for pitee
As in the chambre was for hir departinge;
Bot forth she moot, wher-so she wepe or
singe.

O firste moevyng cruel firmament,
With thy diurnal sweigh that crowdest
ay
And hurlest al from Est til Occident,
That naturelly wolde holde another way,
Thy crowding set the heven in swich
array
At the beginning of this fiers viage,
That cruel Mars hath slayn this mariage.

Infortunat ascendent tortuous,
Of which the lord is helples falle, allas!
Out of his angle in-to the derkest hous.
O Mars, O Atazir, as in this cas!
O feble mone, unhappy been thy pas!
Thou knittest thee ther thou art nat
receyved,
Ther thou were weel, fro thennes artow
weyved.

Imprudent emperour of Rome, allas!
Was ther no philosophre in all thy
toun?
Is no tyme bet than other in swich cas?
Of viage is ther noon eleccioun,
Namely to folk of heigh condicioun,
Nat whan a rote is of a birthe y-knowe?
Allas! we ben to lewed or to slowe.

To shippe is brought this woful faire
mayde
Solempnely, with every circumstance.
'Now Iesu Crist be with yow alle,' she
sayde;
Ther nis namore but 'farewel! faire
Custance!'
She peyneth hir to make good countenance,
And forth I lete hir sayle in this manere,
And turne I wol agayn to my matere.

The moder of the sowdan, welle of vyces,
Espyëd hath hir sones pleyn entente,
How he wol lete his olde sacrifyces,
And right anon she for hir conseil sente;
And they ben come, to knowe what she
mente.
And when assembled was this folk infere,
She sette hir doun, and sayde as ye shal
here.

'Lordes,' quod she, 'ye knowen
everichon,
How that my sone in point is for to lete
The holy lawes of our Alkaron,
Yeven by goddes message Makomete.
But oon avow to grete god I hete,
The lyf shal rather out of my body sterte
Than Makometes lawe out of myn herte!

What shulde us tyden of this newe lawe
But thraldom to our bodies and penance?
And afterward in helle to be drawe

For we reneyed Mahoun our creance?
But, lordes, wol ye maken assurance,
As I shal seyn, assenting to my lore,
And I shall make us sauf for evermore?'

They sworen and assenten, every man,
To live with hir and dye, and by hir stonde;
And everich, in the beste wyse he can,
To strengthen hir shal alle his freendes fonde;
And she hath this empryse y-take on honde,
Which ye shal heren that I shal devyse,
And to hem alle she spak right in this wyse.

'We shul first feyne us Cristendom to take,
Cold water shal not greve us but a lyte;
And I shal swich a feste and revel make,
That, as I trowe, I shal the sowdan quyte.
For though his wyf be cristned never so whyte,
She shal have nede to wasshe awey the rede,
Thogh she a font-ful water with hir lede.'

O sowdanesse, rote of iniquitee,
Virago, thou Semyram the secounde,
O serpent under femininitee,
Lyk to the serpent depe in helle y-bounde,
O feyned womman, al that may confounde
Vertu and innocence, thurgh thy malyce,
Is bred in thee, as nest of every vyce!

O Satan, envious sin thilke day
That thou were chased from our heritage,
Wel knowestow to wommen the olde way!
Thou madest Eva bringe us in servage.
Thou wolt fordoon this Cristen mariage.
Thyn instrument so, weylawey the whyle!
Makestow of wommen, whan thou wolt begyle.

This sowdanesse, whom I thus blame and warie,
Leet prively hir conseil goon hir way.

What sholde I in this tale lenger tarie?
She rydeth to the sowdan on a day,
And seyde him, that she wolde reneye hir lay,
And Cristendom of preestes handes fonge,
Repenting hir she hethen was so longe,

Biseching him to doon hir that honour,
That she moste han the Cristen men to feste;
'To plesen hem I wol do my labour.'
The sowdan seith, 'I wol don at your heste,'
And kneling thanketh hir of that requeste.
So glad he was, he niste what to seye;
She kiste hir sone, and hoom she gooth hir weye.

Explicit prima pars. Sequitur pars secunda.

Arryved ben this Cristen folk to londe,
In Surrie, with a greet solempne route,
And hastily this sowdan sente his sonde,
First to his moder, and al the regne aboute,
And seyde, his wyf was comen, out of doute,
And preyde hir for to ryde agayn the quene,
The honour of his regne to sustene.

Gret was the prees, and riche was tharray
Of Surriens and Romayns met y-fere;
The moder of the sowdan riche and gay,
Receyveth hir with al-so glad a chere
As any moder mighte hir doghter dere,
And to the nexte citee ther bisyde
A softe pas solempnely they ryde.

Noght trowe I the triumphe of Iulius,
Of which that Lucan maketh swich a bost,
Was royaller, ne more curious
Than was thassemblee of this blisful host.
But this scorpioun, this wikked gost,
The sowdanesse, for al hir flateringe,
Caste under this ful mortally to stinge.

The sowdan comth him-self sone after this
So royally, that wonder is to telle,

And welcometh hir with alle Ioye and blis.
And thus in merthe and Ioye I lete hem dwelle.
The fruyt of this matere is that I telle.
Whan tyme cam, men thoughte it for the beste
That revel stinte, and men goon to hir reste.

The tyme cam, this olde sowdanesse
Ordeyned hath this feste of which I tolde,
And to the feste Cristen folk hem dresse
In general, ye! bothe yonge and olde.
Here may men feste and royaltee biholde,
And deyntees mo than I can yow devyse,
But al to dere they boughte it er they ryse.

O sodeyn wo! that ever art successour
To worldly blisse, spreynd with bitternesse;
Thende of the Ioye of our worldly labour;
Wo occupieth the fyn of our gladnesse.
Herke this conseil for thy sikernesse,
Up-on thy glade day have in thy minde
The unwar wo or harm that comth bihinde.

For shortly for to tellen at o word,
The sowdan and the Cristen everichone
Ben al to-hewe and stiked at the bord,
But it were only dame Custance allone.
This olde sowdanesse, cursed crone,
Hath with hir frendes doon this cursed dede,
For she hir-self wolde al the contree lede.

Ne ther was Surrien noon that was converted
That of the conseil of the sowdan woot,
That he nas al to-hewe er he asterted.
And Custance han they take anon, foothoot,
And in a shippe al sterelees, god woot,
They han hir set, and bidde hir lerne sayle
Out of Surrye agaynward to Itayle.

A certein tresor that she thider ladde,
And, sooth to sayn, vitaille gret plentee
They han hir yeven, and clothes eek she hadde,
And forth she sayleth in the salte see.
O my Custance, ful of benignitee,
O emperoures yonge doghter dere,
He that is lord of fortune be thy stere!

She blesseth hir, and with ful pitous voys
Un-to the croys of Crist thus seyde she,
'O clere, o welful auter, holy croys,
Reed of the lambes blood full of pitee,
That wesh the world fro the olde iniquitee,
Me fro the feend, and fro his clawes kepe,
That day that I shal drenchen in the depe.

Victorious tree, proteccioun of trewe,
That only worthy were for to bere
The king of heven with his woundes newe,
The whyte lamb, that hurt was with the spere,
Flemer of feendes out of him and here
On which thy limes feithfully extenden,
Me keep, and yif me might my lyf tamenden.'

Yeres and dayes fleet this creature
Thurghout the see of Grece un-to the strayte
Of Marrok, as it was hir aventure;
On many a sory meel now may she bayte;
After her deeth ful often may she wayte,
Er that the wilde wawes wole hir dryve
Un-to the place, ther she shal arryve.

Men mighten asken why she was not slayn?
Eek at the feste who mighte hir body save?
And I answere to that demaunde agayn,
Who saved Daniel in the horrible cave,
Ther every wight save he, maister and knave,
Was with the leoun frete er he asterte?
No wight but god, that he bar in his herte.

God liste to shewe his wonderful miracle
In hir, for we sholde seen his mighty werkes;

Crist, which that is to every harm triacle,
By certein menes ofte, as knowen clerkes,
Doth thing for certein ende that ful derk is
To mannes wit, that for our ignorance
Ne conne not knowe his prudent purveyance.

Now, sith she was not at the feste y-slawe,
Who kepte hir fro the drenching in the see?
Who kepte Ionas in the fisshes mawe
Til he was spouted up at Ninivee?
Wel may men knowe it was no wight but he
That kepte peple Ebraik fro hir drenchinge,
With drye feet thurgh-out the see passinge.

Who bad the foure spirits of tempest,
That power han tanoyen land and see,
'Bothe north and south, and also west and est,
Anoyeth neither see, ne land, ne tree?'
Sothly, the comaundour of that was he,
That fro the tempest ay this womman kepte
As wel whan [that] she wook as whan she slepte.

Wher mighte this womman mete and drinke have?
Three yeer and more how lasteth hir vitaille?
Who fedde the Egipcien Marie in the cave,
Or in desert? no wight but Crist, sans faille.
Fyve thousand folk it was as gret mervaille
With loves fyve and fisshes two to fede.
God sente his foison at hir grete nede.

She dryveth forth in-to our occean
Thurgh-out our wilde see, til, atte laste,
Under an hold that nempnen I ne can,
Fer in Northumberlond the wawe hir caste,
And in the sond hir ship stiked so faste,
That thennes wolde it noght of al a tyde,
The wille of Crist was that she shulde abyde.

The constable of the castel doun is fare
To seen this wrak, and al the ship he soghte,
And fond this wery womman ful of care;
He fond also the tresor that she broghte.
In hir langage mercy she bisoghte
The lyf out of hir body for to twinne,
Hir to delivere of wo that she was inne.

A maner Latin corrupt was hir speche,
But algates ther-by was she understonde;
The constable, whan him list no lenger seche,
This woful womman broghte he to the londe;
She kneleth doun, and thanketh goddes sonde.
But what she was, she wolde no man seye,
For foul ne fair, thogh that she shulde deye.

She seyde, she was so mased in the see
That she forgat hir minde, by hir trouthe;
The constable hath of hir so greet pitee,
And eek his wyf, that they wepen for routhe,
She was so diligent, with-outen slouthe,
To serve and plesen everich in that place,
That alle hir loven that loken on hir face.

This constable and dame Hermengild his wyf
Were payens, and that contree everywhere;
But Hermengild lovede hir right as hir lyf,
And Custance hath so longe soiourned there,
In orisons, with many a bitter tere,
Til Iesu hath converted thurgh his grace
Dame Hermengild, constablesse of that place.

In al that lond no Cristen durste route,
Alle Cristen folk ben fled fro that contree

Thurgh payens, that conquereden al aboute
The plages of the North, by land and see;
To walis fled the Cristianitee
Of olde Britons, dwellinge in this yle;
Ther was her refut for the mene whyle.

But yet nere Cristen Britons so exyled
That ther nere somme that in hir privetee
Honoured Crist, and hethen folk bigyled;
And ny the castel swiche ther dwelten three.
That oon of hem was blind, and mighte nat see
But it were with thilke yën of his minde,
With whiche men seen, after that they ben blinde.

Bright was the sonne as in that someres day,
For which the constable and his wyf also
And Custance han y-take the righte way
Toward the see, a furlong wey or two,
To pleyen and to romen to and fro;
And in hir walk this blinde man they mette
Croked and old, with yën faste y-shette.

'In name of Crist,' cryde this blinde Britoun,
'Dame Hermengild, yif me my sighte agayn.'
This lady wex affrayed of the soun,
Lest that hir housbond, shortly for to sayn,
Wolde hir for Iesu Cristes love han slayn,
Til Custance made hir bold, and bad hir werche
The wil of Crist, as doghter of his chirche.

The constable wex abasshed of that sight,
And seyde, 'what amounteth al this fare?'
Custance answerde, 'sire, it is Cristes might,
That helpeth folk out of the feendes snare.'
And so ferforth she gan our lay declare,
That she the constable, er that it were eve,
Converted, and on Crist made him bileve.

This constable was no-thing lord of this place
Of which I speke, ther he Custance fond,
But kepte it strongly, many wintres space,
Under Alla, king of al Northumberlond,
That was ful wys, and worthy of his hond
Agayn the Scottes, as men may wel here,
But turne I wol agayn to my matere.

Sathan, that ever us waiteth to bigyle,
Saugh of Custance al hir perfeccioun,
And caste anon how he mighte quyte hir whyle,
And made a yong knight, that dwelte in that toun,
Love hir so hote, of foul affeccioun,
That verrally him thoughte he shulde spille
But he of hir mighte ones have his wille.

He woweth hir, but it availleth noght,
She wolde do no sinne, by no weye;
And, for despyt, he compassed in his thoght
To maken hir on shamful deth to deye.
He wayteth whan the constable was aweye,
And prively, up-on a night, he crepte
In Hermengildes chambre whyl she slepte.

Wery, for-waked in her orisouns,
Slepeth Custance, and Hermengild also.
This knight, thurgh Sathanas temptaciouns,
Al softely is to the bed y-go,
And kitte the throte of Hermengild a-two,
And leyde the blody knyf by dame Custance,
And wente his wey, ther god yeve him meschance!

Sone after comth this constable hoom agayn,

And eek Alla, that king was of that lond,
And saugh his wyf despitously y-slain,
For which ful ofte he weep and wrong his hond,
And in the bed the blody knyf he fond
By dame Custance; allas! what mighte she seye?
For verray wo hir wit was al aweye.

To king Alla was told al this meschance,
And eek the tyme, and where, and in what wyse
That in a ship was founden dame Custance,
As heer-biforn that ye han herd devyse.
The kinges herte of pitee gan agryse,
Whan he saugh so benigne a creature
Falle in disese and in misaventure.

For as the lomb toward his deeth is broght,
So stant this innocent bifore the king;
This false knight-that hath this tresoun wroght
Berth hir on hond that she hath doon this thing.
But nathelees, ther was greet moorning
Among the peple, and seyn, 'they can not gesse
That she hath doon so greet a wikkednesse.

For they han seyn hir ever so vertuous,
And loving Hermengild right as her lyf.'
Of this bar witnesse everich in that hous
Save he that Hermengild slow with his knyf.
This gentil king hath caught a gret motyf
Of this witnesse, and thoghte he wolde enquere
Depper in this, a trouthe for to lere.

Allas! Custance! thou hast no champioun,
Ne fighte canstow nought, so weylawey!
But he, that starf for our redempcioun
And bond Sathan (and yit lyth ther he lay)
So be thy stronge champioun this day!
For, but-if Crist open miracle kythe,
Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as swythe.

She sette her doun on knees, and thus she sayde,
'Immortal god, that savedest Susanne
Fro false blame, and thou, merciful mayde,
Mary I mene, doghter to Seint Anne,
Bifore whos child aungeles singe Osanne,
If I be giltlees of this felonye,
My socour be, for elles I shal dye!'

Have ye nat seyn som tyme a pale face,
Among a prees, of him that hath be lad
Toward his deeth, wher-as him gat no grace,
And swich a colour in his face hath had,
Men mighte knowe his face, that was bistad,
Amonges alle the faces in that route:
So stant Custance, and loketh hir aboute.

O quenes, livinge in prosperitee,
Duchesses, and ye ladies everichone,
Haveth som routhe on hir adversitee;
An emperoures doghter stant allone;
She hath no wight to whom to make hir mone.
O blood royal, that stondest in this drede,
Fer ben thy freendes at thy grete nede!

This Alla king hath swich compassioun,
As gentil herte is fulfild of pitee,
That from his yën ran the water doun.
'Now hastily do fecche a book,' quod he,
'And if this knight wol sweren how that she
This womman slow, yet wole we us avyse
Whom that we wole that shal ben our Iustyse.'

A Briton book, writen with Evangyles,
Was fet, and on this book he swoor anoon
She gilty was, and in the mene whyles
A hand him smoot upon the nekke-boon,
That doun he fil atones as a stoon,
And bothe his yën broste out of his face
In sight of every body in that place.

A vois was herd in general audience,
And seyde, 'thou hast desclaundred giltelees
The doghter of holy chirche in hey presence;
Thus hastou doon, and yet holde I my pees.'
Of this mervaille agast was al the prees;
As mased folk they stoden everichone,
For drede of wreche, save Custance allone.

Greet was the drede and eek the repentance
Of hem that hadden wrong suspeccioun
Upon this sely innocent Custance;
And, for this miracle, in conclusioun,
And by Custances mediacioun,
The king, and many another in that place,
Converted was, thanked be Cristes grace!

This false knight was slayn for his untrouthe
By Iugement of Alla hastifly;
And yet Custance hadde of his deeth gret routhe.
And after this Iesus, of his mercy,
Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
This holy mayden, that is so bright and shene,
And thus hath Crist y-maad Custance a quene.

But who was woful, if I shal nat lye,
Of this wedding but Donegild, and na mo,
The kinges moder, ful of tirannye?
Hir thoughte hir cursed herte brast a-two;
She wolde noght hir sone had do so;
Hir thoughte a despit, that he sholde take
So strange a creature un-to his make.

Me list nat of the chaf nor of the stree
Maken so long a tale, as of the corn.
What sholde I tellen of the royaltee
At mariage, or which cours gooth biforn,
Who bloweth in a trompe or in an horn?
The fruit of every tale is for to seye;
They ete, and drinke, and daunce, and singe, and pleye.

They goon to bedde, as it was skile and right;
For, thogh that wyves been ful holy thinges,
They moste take in pacience at night
Swich maner necessaries as been plesinges
To folk that han y-wedded hem with ringes,
And leye a lyte hir holinesse asyde
As for the tyme; it may no bet bityde.

On hir he gat a knave-child anoon,
And to a bishop and his constable eke
He took his wyf to kepe, whan he is goon
To Scotland-ward, his fo-men for to seke;
Now faire Custance, that is so humble and meke,
So longe is goon with childe, til that stille
She halt hir chambre, abyding Cristes wille.

The tyme is come, a knave-child she ber;
Mauricius at the font-stoon they him calle;
This Constable dooth forth come a messager,
And wroot un-to his king, that cleped was Alle,
How that this blisful tyding is bifalle,
And othere tydings speedful for to seye;
He takth the lettre, and forth he gooth his weye.

This messager, to doon his avantage,
Un-to the kinges moder rydeth swythe,
And salueth hir ful faire in his langage,
'Madame,' quod he, 'ye may be glad and blythe,
And thanke god an hundred thousand sythe;
My lady quene hath child, with-outen doute.
To Ioye and blisse of al this regne aboute.

Lo, heer the lettres seled of this thing,
That I mot bere with al the haste I may;
If ye wol aught un-to your sone the king,
I am your servant, bothe night and day.'

Donegild answerde, 'as now at this tyme, nay;
But heer al night I wol thou take thy reste,
Tomorwe wol I seye thee what me leste.'

This messager drank sadly ale and wyn,
And stolen were his lettres prively
Out of his box, whyl he sleep as a swyn;
And countrefeted was ful subtilly
Another lettre, wroght ful sinfully,
Un-to the king direct of this matere
Fro his constable, as ye shul after here.

The lettre spak, 'the queen delivered was
Of so horrible a feendly creature,
That in the castel noon so hardy was
That any whyle dorste ther endure.
The moder was an elf, by aventure
Y-come, by charmes or by sorcerye,
And every wight hateth hir companye.'

Wo was this king whan he this lettre had seyn,
But to no wighte he tolde his sorwes sore,
But of his owene honde he wroot ageyn,
'Welcome the sonde of Crist for evermore
To me, that am now lerned in his lore;
Lord, welcome be thy lust and thy plesaunce,
My lust I putte al in thyn ordinaunce!

Kepeth this child, al be it foul or fair,
And eek my wyf, un-to myn hoomcominge;
Crist, whan him list, may sende me an heir
More agreable than this to my lykinge.'
This lettre he seleth, prively wepinge,
Which to the messager was take sone,
And forth he gooth; ther is na more to done.

O messager, fulfild of dronkenesse,
Strong is thy breeth, thy limes faltren ay,
And thou biwreyest alle secreenesse.
Thy mind is lorn, thou Ianglest as a Iay,
Thy face is turned in a newe array!
Ther dronkenesse regneth in any route,
There is no conseil hid, with-outen doute.

O Donegild, I ne have noon English digne
Un-to thy malice and thy tirannye!
And therfor to the feend I thee resigne,
Let him endyten of thy traitorye!
Fy, mannish, fy! o nay, by god, I lye,
Fy, *feendly* spirit, for I dar wel telle,
Though thou heer walke, thy spirit is in helle!

This messager comth fro the king agayn,
And at the kinges modres court he lighte,
And she was of this messager ful fayn,
And plesed him in al that ever she mighte.
He drank, and wel his girdel underpighte.
He slepeth, and he snoreth in his gyse
Al night, un-til the sonne gan aryse.

Eft were his lettres stolen everichon
And countrefeted lettres in this wyse;
'The king comandeth his constable anon,
Up peyne of hanging, and on heigh Iuÿse,
That he ne sholde suffren in no wyse
Custance in-with his regne for tabyde
Thre dayes and a quarter of a tyde;

But in the same ship as he hir fond,
Hir and hir yonge sone, and al hir gere,
He sholde putte, and croude hir fro the lond,
And charge hir that she never eft come there.'
O my Custance, wel may thy goost have fere
And sleping in thy dreem been in penance,
When Donegild caste al this ordinance!

This messager on morwe, whan he wook,
Un-to the castel halt the nexte wey,
And to the constable he the lettre took;
And whan that he this pitous lettre sey,
Ful ofte he seyde 'allas!' and 'weylawey!'
'Lord Crist,' quod he, 'how may this world endure?
So ful of sinne is many a creature!

O mighty god, if that it be thy wille,
Sith thou art rightful Iuge, how may it be
That thou wolt suffren innocents to spille,
And wikked folk regne in prosperitee?
O good Custance, allas! so wo is me
That I mot be thy tormentour, or deye
On shames deeth; ther is noon other weye!'

Wepen bothe yonge and olde in al that place,
Whan that the king this cursed lettre sente,
And Custance, with a deedly pale face,
The ferthe day toward hir ship she wente.
But natheles she taketh in good entente
The wille of Crist, and, kneling on the stronde,
She seyde, 'lord! ay wel-com be thy sonde!

He that me kepte fro the false blame
Whyl I was on the londe amonges yow,
He can me kepe from harme and eek fro shame
In salte see, al-thogh I se nat how.
As strong as ever he was, he is yet now.
In him triste I, and in his moder dere,
That is to me my seyl and eek my stere.'

Hir litel child lay weping in hir arm,
And kneling, pitously to him she seyde,
'Pees, litel sone, I wol do thee non harm.'
With that hir kerchef of hir heed she breyde,
And over his litel yën she it leyde;
And in hir arm she lulleth it ful faste,
And in-to heven hir yën up she caste.

'Moder,' quod she, 'and mayde bright, Marye,
Sooth is that thurgh wommannes eggement
Mankind was lorn and damned ay to dye,
For which thy child was on a croys y-rent;
Thy blisful yën sawe al his torment;
Than is ther no comparisoun bitwene
Thy wo and any wo man may sustene.

Thou sawe thy child y-slayn bifor thyn yën,
And yet now liveth my litel child, parfay!
Now, lady bright, to whom alle woful cryën,
Thou glorie of wommanhede, thou faire may,
Thou haven of refut, brighte sterre of day,
Rewe on my child, that of thy gentillesse
Rewest on every rewful in distresse!

O litel child, allas! what is thy gilt,
That never wroughtest sinne as yet, pardee,
Why wil thyn harde fader han thee spilt?
O mercy, dere Constable!' quod she;
'As lat my litel child dwelle heer with thee;
And if thou darst not saven him, for blame,
So kis him ones in his fadres name!'

Ther-with she loketh bakward to the londe,
And seyde, 'far-wel, housbond routhelees!'
And up she rist, and walketh doun the stronde
Toward the ship; hir folweth al the prees,
And ever she preyeth hir child to holde his pees;
And taketh hir leve, and with an holy entente
She blesseth hir; and in-to ship she wente.

Vitailled was the ship, it is no drede,
Habundantly for hir, ful longe space,
And other necessaries that sholde nede
She hadde y-nogh, heried be goddes grace!
For wind and weder almighty god purchace,
And bringe hir hoom! I can no bettre seye;
But in the see she dryveth forth hir weye.

Explicit secunda pars. Sequitur pars tercia.

Alla the king comth hoom, sone after this,
Unto his castel of the which I tolde,
And axeth wher his wyf and his child is.
The constable gan aboute his herte colde,
And pleynly al the maner he him tolde
As ye han herd, I can telle it no bettre,
And sheweth the king his seel and [eek] his lettre,

And seyde, 'lord, as ye comaunded me
Up peyne of deeth, so have I doon, certein.'
This messager tormented was til he
Moste biknowe and tellen, plat and plein,
Fro night to night, in what place he had leyn.
And thus, by wit and subtil enqueringe,
Ymagined was by whom this harm gan springe.

The hand was knowe that the lettre wroot,
And al the venim of this cursed dede,
But in what wyse, certeinly I noot.
Theffect is this, that Alla, out of drede,
His moder slow, that men may pleinly rede,
For that she traitour was to hir ligeaunce.
Thus endeth olde Donegild with meschaunce.

The sorwe that this Alla, night and day,
Maketh for his wyf and for his child also,
Ther is no tonge that it telle may.
But now wol I un-to Custance go,
That fleteth in the see, in peyne and wo,
Fyve yeer and more, as lyked Cristes sonde,
Er that hir ship approched un-to londe.

Under an hethen castel, atte laste,
Of which the name in my text noght I finde,
Custance and eek hir child the see upcaste.
Almighty god, that saveth al mankinde,
Have on Custance and on hir child som minde,
That fallen is in hethen land eft-sone,
In point to spille, as I shal telle yow sone.

Doun from the castel comth ther many a wight
To gauren on this ship and on Custance.
But shortly, from the castel, on a night,
The lordes styward — god yeve him meschaunce! —
A theef, that had reneyed our creaunce,
Com in-to ship allone, and seyde he sholde
Hir lemman be, wher-so she wolde or nolde.

Wo was this wrecched womman tho bigon,
Hir child cryde, and she cryde pitously;
But blisful Marie heelp hir right anon;
For with hir strugling wel and mightily
The theef fil over bord al sodeinly,
And in the see he dreynte for vengeance;
And thus hath Crist unwemmed kept Custance.

O foule lust of luxurie! lo, thyn ende! *Auctor.*
Nat only that thou feyntest mannes minde,
But verraily thou wolt his body shende;
Thende of thy werk or of thy lustes blinde
Is compleyning, how many-oon may men finde
That noght for werk som-tyme, but for thentente
To doon this sinne, ben outher sleyn or shente!

How may this wayke womman han this strengthe
Hir to defende agayn this renegat?
O Golias, unmesurable of lengthe,
How mighte David make thee so mat,
So yong and of armure so desolat?
How dorste he loke up-on thy dredful face?
Wel may men seen, it nas but goddes grace!

Who yaf Iudith corage or hardinesse
To sleen him, Olofernus, in his tente,
And to delliveren out of wrecchednesse

The peple of god? I seye, for this entente,
That, right as god spirit of vigour sente
To hem, and saved hem out of meschance,
So sente he might and vigour to Custance.

Forth goth hir ship thurgh-out the narwe mouth
Of Iubaltar and Septe, dryving ay,
Som-tyme West, som-tyme North and South,
And som-tyme Est, ful many a wery day,
Til Cristes moder (blessed be she ay!)
Hath shapen, thurgh hir endelees goodnesse,
To make an ende of al hir hevinesse.

Now lat us stinte of Custance but a throwe,
And speke we of the Romain Emperour,
That out of Surrie hath by lettres knowe
The slaughtre of Cristen folk, and dishonour
Don to his doghter by a fals traitour,
I mene the cursed wikked sowdanesse,
That at the feste leet sleen both more and lesse.

For which this emperour hath sent anoon
His senatour, with royal ordinance,
And othere lordes, god wot, many oon,
On Surriens to taken heigh vengeance.
They brennen, sleen, and bringe hem to meschance
Ful many a day; but shortly, this is thende,
Homward to Rome they shapen hem to wende.

This senatour repaireth with victorie
To Rome-ward, sayling ful royally,
And mette the ship dryving, as seith the storie,
In which Custance sit ful pitously.
No-thing ne knew he what she was, ne why
She was in swich array; ne she nil seye
Of hir estaat, althogh she sholde deye.

He bringeth hir to Rome, and to his wyf
He yaf hir, and hir yonge sone also;
And with the senatour she ladde her lyf.
Thus can our lady bringen out of wo
Woful Custance, and many another mo.
And longe tyme dwelled she in that place,
In holy werkes ever, as was hir grace.

The senatoures wyf hir aunte was,
But for al that she knew hir never the more;
I wol no lenger tarien in this cas,
But to king Alla, which I spak of yore,
That for his wyf wepeth and syketh sore,
I wol retourne, and lete I wol Custance
Under the senatoures governance.

King Alla, which that hadde his moder slayn,
Upon a day fil in swich repentance,
That, if I shortly tellen shal and plain,
To Rome he comth, to receyven his penance;
And putte him in the popes ordinance
In heigh and low, and Iesu Crist bisoghte
Foryeve his wikked werkes that he wroghte.

The fame anon thurgh Rome toun is born,
How Alla king shal come in pilgrimage,
By herbergeours that wenten him biforn;
For which the senatour, as was usage,
Rood him ageyn, and many of his linage,
As wel to shewen his heighe magnificence
As to don any king a reverence.

Greet chere dooth this noble senatour
To king Alla, and he to him also;
Everich of hem doth other greet honour;
And so bifel that, in a day or two,
This senatour is to king Alla go
To feste, and shortly, if I shal nat lye,
Custances sone wente in his companye.

Som men wolde seyn, at requeste of Custance,
This senatour hath lad this child to feste;

I may nat tellen every circumstance,
Be as be may, ther was he at the leste.
But soth is this, that, at his modres heste,
Biforn Alla, during the metes space,
The child stood, loking in the kinges face.

This Alla king hath of this child greet wonder,
And to the senatour he seyde anon,
'Whos is that faire child that stondeth yonder?'
'I moot,' quod he, 'by god, and by seint Iohn!
A moder he hath, but fader hath he non
That I of woot'—but shortly, in a stounde,
He tolde Alla how that this child was founde.

'But god wot,' quod this senatour also,
'So vertuous a livere in my lyf,
Ne saugh I never as she, ne herde of mo
Of worldly wommen, mayden, nor of wyf;
I dar wel seyn hir hadde lever a knyf
Thurgh-out her breste, than been a woman wikke;
Ther is no man coude bringe hir to that prikke.'

Now was this childe as lyk un-to Custance
As possible is a creature to be.
This Alla hath the face in remembrance
Of dame Custance, and ther-on mused he
If that the childes moder were aught she
That was his wyf, and privelý he sighte,
And spedde him fro the table that he mighte.

'Parfay,' thoghte he, 'fantome is in myn heed!
I oghte deme, of skilful Iugement,
That in the salte see my wyf is deed.'
And afterward he made his argument—
'What woot I, if that Crist have hider y-sent
My wyf by see, as wel as he hir sente
To my contree fro thennes that she wente?'

And, after noon, hoom with the senatour
Goth Alla, for to seen this wonder chaunce.
This senatour dooth Alla greet honour,
And hastifly he sente after Custaunce.
But trusteth weel, hir liste nat to daunce
Whan that she wiste wherefor was that sonde.
Unnethe up-on hir feet she mighte stonde.

When Alla saugh his wyf, faire he hir grette,
And weep, that it was routhe for to see.
For at the firste look he on hir sette
He knew wel verraily that it was she.
And she for sorwe as domb stant as a tree;
So was hir herte shet in hir distresse
Whan she remembred his unkindenesse.

Twyës she swowned in his owne sighte;
He weep, and him excuseth pitously:—
'Now god,' quod he, 'and alle his halwes brighte
So wisly on my soule as have mercy,
That of your harm as giltelees am I
As is Maurice my sone so lyk your face;
Elles the feend me fecche out of this place!'

Long was the sobbing and the bitter peyne
Er that hir woful hertes mighte cesse;
Greet was the pitee for to here hem pleyne,
Thurgh whiche pleintes gan hir wo encresse.
I prey yow al my labour to relesse;
I may nat telle hir wo un-til tomorwe,
I am so wery for to speke of sorwe.

But fynally, when that the sooth is wist
That Alla giltelees was of hir wo,
I trowe an hundred tymes been they kist,
And swich a blisse is ther bitwix hem two
That, save the Ioye that lasteth evermo,
Ther is non lyk, that any creature
Hath seyn or shal, whyl that the world may dure.

Tho preyde she hir housbond mekely,
In relief of hir longe pitous pyne,
That he wold preye hir fader specially
That, of his magestee, he wolde enclyne
To vouche-sauf som day with him to dyne;
She preyde him eek, he sholde by no weye
Un-to hir fader no word of hir seye.

Som men wold seyn, how that the child Maurice
Doth this message un-to this emperour;
But, as I gesse, Alla was nat so nyce
To him, that was of so sovereyn honour
As he that is of Cristen folk the flour,
Sente any child, but it is bet to deme
He wente him-self, and so it may wel seme.

This emperour hath graunted gentilly
To come to diner, as he him bisoghte;
And wel rede I, he loked busily
Up-on this child, and on his doghter thoghte
Alla goth to his in, and, as him oghte,
Arrayed for this feste in every wyse
As ferforth as his conning may suffyse.

The morwe cam, and Alla gan him dresse,
And eek his wyf, this emperour to mete;
And forth they ryde in Ioye and in gladnesse.
And whan she saugh hir fader in the strete,
She lighte doun, and falleth him to fete.
'Fader,' quod she, 'your yonge child Custance
Is now ful clene out of your remembrance.

I am your doghter Custance,' quod she,
'That whylom ye han sent un-to Surrye.
It am I, fader, that in the salte see
Was put allone and dampned for to dye.
Now, gode fader, mercy I yow crye,
Send me namore un-to non hethenesse,
But thonketh my lord heer of his kindenesse.'

Who can the pitous Ioye tellen al
Bitwix hem three, sin they ben thus y-mette?
But of my tale made an ende I shal;
The day goth faste, I wol no lenger lette.
This glade folk to diner they hem sette;
In Ioye and blisse at mete I lete hem dwelle
A thousand fold wel more than I can telle.

This child Maurice was sithen emperour
Maad by the pope, and lived cristenly.
To Cristes chirche he dide greet honour;
But I lete al his storie passen by,
Of Custance is my tale specially.
In olde Romayn gestes may men finde
Maurices lyf; I bere it noght in minde.

This king Alla, whan he his tyme sey,
With his Custance, his holy wyf so swete,
To Engelond been they come the righte wey,
Wher-as they live in Ioye and in quiete.
But litel whyl it lasteth, I yow hete,
Ioye of this world, for tyme wol nat abyde;
Fro day to night it changeth as the tyde.

Who lived ever in swich delyt o day
That him ne moeved outher conscience,
Or ire, or talent, or som kin affray,
Envye, or pryde, or passion, or offence?
I ne seye but for this ende this sentence,
That litel whyl in Ioye or in plesance
Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance.

For deeth, that taketh of heigh and low his rente,
When passed was a yeer, even as I gesse,
Out of this world this king Alla he hente,
For whom Custance hath ful gret hevinesse.
Now lat us preyen god his soule blesse!
And dame Custance, fynally to seye,
Towards the toun of Rome gooth hir weye.

To Rome is come this holy creature,
And fyndeth ther hir frendes hole and sounde:
Now is she scaped al hir aventure;
And whan that she hir fader hath y-founde,
Doun on hir kneës falleth she to grounde;
Weping for tendrenesse in herte blythe,
She herieth god an hundred thousand sythe.

In vertu and in holy almes-dede
They liven alle, and never a-sonder wende;
Til deeth departed hem, this lyf they lede.
And fareth now weel, my tale is at an ende.
Now Iesu Crist, that of his might may sende
Ioye after wo, governe us in his grace,
And kepe us alle that ben in this place!
Amen.

Here endeth the Tale of the Man of Lawe; and next folweth the Shipmannes Prolog.

THE SHIPMAN'S PROLOGUE.

Here biginneth the Shipmannes Prolog.

Our hoste up-on his stiropes stood anon,
And seyde, 'good men, herkneth everich on;
This was a thrifty tale for the nones!
Sir parish prest,' quod he, 'for goddes bones,
Tel us a tale, as was thy forward yore.
I see wel that ye lerned men in lore
Can moche good, by goddes dignitee!'
The Persone him answerde, '*benedicite!*
What eyleth the man, so sinfully to swere?'
Our hoste answerde, 'O Iankin, be ye there?
I smelle a loller in the wind,' quod he.
'How! good men,' quod our hoste, 'herkneth me;
Abydeth, for goddes digne passioun,
For we shal han a predicacioun;
This loller heer wil prechen us somwhat.'
'Nay, by my fader soule! that shal be nat,'
Seyed the Shipman; 'heer he shal nat preche,
He shal no gospel glosen heer ne teche.
We leve alle in the grete god,' quod he,
'He wolde sowen som difficultee,
Or springen cokkel in our clene corn;
And therfor, hoste, I warne thee biforn,
My Ioly body shal a tale telle,
And I shal clinken yow so mery a belle,
That I shal waken al this companye;
But it shal nat ben of philosophye,
Ne *physices*, ne termes queinte of lawe;
Ther is but litel Latin in my mawe.'

Here endeth the Shipman his Prolog.

THE SHIPMANNES TALE.

Here biginneth the Shipmannes Tale.

A Marchant whylom dwelled at Seint Denys,
That riche was, for which men helde him wys;
A wyf he hadde of excellent beautee,
And compaignable and revelous was she,
Which is a thing that causeth more dispence
Than worth is al the chere and reverence
That men hem doon at festes and at daunces;
Swiche salutaciouns and contenaunces
Passen as dooth a shadwe up-on the wal.
But wo is him that payen moot for al;

The sely housbond, algate he mot paye;
He moot us clothe, and he moot us arraye,
Al for his owene worship richely,
In which array we daunce Iolily.
And if that he noght may, par-aventure,
Or elles, list no swich dispence endure,
But thinketh it is wasted and y-lost,
Than moot another payen for our cost,
Or lene us gold, and that is perilous.
This noble Marchant heeld a worthy hous,
For which he hadde alday so greet repair
For his largesse, and for his wyf was fair,
That wonder is; but herkneth to my tale.
Amonges alle his gestes, grete and smale,
Ther was a monk, a fair man and a bold,
I trowe of thritty winter he was old,
That ever in oon was drawing to that place.
This yonge monk, that was so fair of face,
Aqueinted was so with the gode man,
Sith that hir firste knoweliche bigan,
That in his hous as famulier was he
As it possible is any freend to be.
And for as muchel as this gode man
And eek this monk, of which that I bigan,
Were bothe two y-born in o village,
The monk him claimeth as for cosinage;
And he again, he seith nat ones nay,
But was as glad ther-of as fowel of day;
For to his herte it was a greet plesaunce.
Thus been they knit with eterne alliaunce,
And ech of hem gan other for tassure
Of bretherhede, whyl that hir lyf may dure.
Free was daun Iohn, and namely of dispence,
As in that hous; and ful of diligence
To doon plesaunce, and also greet costage.
He noght forgat to yeve the leeste page
In al that hous; but, after hir degree,
He yaf the lord, and sitthe al his meynee,
When that he cam, som maner honest thing;
For which they were as glad of his coming
As fowel is fayn, whan that the sonne up-ryseth.
Na more of this as now, for it suffyseth.
But so bifel, this marchant on a day
Shoop him to make redy his array
Toward the toun of Brugges for to fare,
To byën ther a porcioun of ware;
For which he hath to Paris sent anon
A messager, and preyed hath daun Iohn
That he sholde come to Seint Denys to pleye
With him and with his wyf a day or tweye,
Er he to Brugges wente, in alle wyse.
This noble monk, of which I yow devyse,
Hath of his abbot, as him list, licence,
By-cause he was a man of heigh prudence,
And eek an officer, out for to ryde,
To seen hir graunges and hir bernes wyde;
And un-to Seint Denys he comth anon.
Who was so welcome as my lord daun Iohn,
Our dere cosin, ful of curteisye?
With him broghte he a Iubbe of Malvesye,
And eek another, ful of fyn Vernage,
And volatyl, as ay was his usage.
And thus I lete hem ete and drinke and pleye,
This marchant and this monk, a day or tweye.
The thridde day, this marchant up aryseth,
And on his nedes sadly him avyseth,
And up in-to his countour-hous goth he
To rekene with him-self, as wel may be,
Of thilke yeer, how that it with him stood,
And how that he despended hadde his good;
And if that he encressed were or noon.
His bokes and his bagges many oon
He leith biforn him on his countingbord;
Ful riche was his tresor and his hord,

For which ful faste his countour-dore he shette ;
And eek he nolde that no man sholde him lette
Of his accountes, for the mene tyme;
And thus he sit til it was passed pryme.
Daun Iohn was risen in the morwe also,
And in the gardin walketh to and fro,
And hath his thinges seyd ful curteisly.
This gode wyf cam walking prively
In-to the gardin, ther he walketh softe,
And him saleweth, as she hath don ofte.
A mayde child cam in hir companye,
Which as hir list she may governe and gye,
For yet under the yerde was the mayde.
'O dere cosin myn, daun Iohn,' she sayde,
'What eyleth yow so rathe for to ryse ?'
'Nece,' quod he, 'it oghte y-nough suffyse
Fyve houres for to slepe up-on a night,
But it were for an old appalled wight,
As been thise wedded men, that lye and dare
As in a forme sit a wery hare,
Were al for-straught with houndes grete and smale.
But dere nece, why be ye so pale ?
I trowe certes that our gode man
Hath yow laboured sith the night bigan,
That yow were nede to resten hastily ?'
And with that word he lough ful merily,
And of his owene thought he wex al reed.
This faire wyf gan for to shake hir heed,
And seyde thus, 'ye, god wot al,' quod she;
'Nay, cosin myn, it stant nat so with me.
For, by that god that yaf me soule and lyf,
In al the reme of France is ther no wyf
That lasse lust hath to that sory pley.
For I may singe "allas" and "weylawey,
That I was born," but to no wight,' quod she,
'Dar I nat telle how that it stant with me.
Wherfore I thinke out of this land to wende,
Or elles of my-self to make an ende,
So ful am I of drede and eek of care.'
This monk bigan up-on this wyf to stare,
And seyde, 'allas, my nece, god forbede
That ye, for any sorwe or any drede,
Fordo your-self; but telleth me your grief;
Paraventure I may, in your meschief,
Conseille or helpe, and therfore telleth me
Al your anoy, for it shal been secree;
For on my porthors here I make an ooth,
That never in my lyf, for lief ne looth,
Ne shal I of no conseil yow biwreye.'
'The same agayn to yow,' quod she, 'I seye;
By god and by this porthors, I yow swere,
Though men me wolde al in-to peces tere,
Ne shal I never, for to goon to helle,
Biwreye a word of thing that ye me telle,
Nat for no cosinage ne alliance,
But verraily, for love and affiance.'
Thus been they sworn, and heer-upon they kiste,
And ech of hem tolde other what hem liste.
'Cosin,' quod she, 'if that I hadde a space,
As I have noon, and namely in this place,
Than wolde I telle a legende of my lyf,
What I have suffred sith I was a wyf
With myn housbonde, al be he your cosyn.'
'Nay,' quod this monk, 'by god and seint Martyn,
He is na more cosin un-to me
Than is this leef that hangeth on the tree!
I clepe him so, by Seint Denys of Fraunce,
To have the more cause of aqueintaunce
Of yow, which I have loved specially
Aboven alle wommen sikerly;
This swere I yow on my professioun.
Telleth your grief, lest that he come adoun,

And hasteth yow, and gooth your wey anon.'
'My dere love,' quod she, 'o my daun Iohn,
Ful lief were me this conseil for to hyde,
But out it moot, I may namore abyde.
Myn housbond is to me the worste man
That ever was, sith that the world bigan.
But sith I am a wyf, it sit nat me
To tellen no wight of our privetee,
Neither a bedde, ne in non other place;
God shilde I sholde it tellen, for his grace!
A wyf ne shal nat seyn of hir housbonde
But al honour, as I can understonde;
Save un-to yow thus muche I tellen shal;
As help me god, he is noght worth at al
In no degree the value of a flye.
But yet me greveth most his nigardye;
And wel ye woot that wommen naturelly
Desyren thinges sixe, as wel as I.
They wolde that hir housbondes sholde be
Hardy, and wyse, and riche, and ther-to free,
And buxom to his wyf, and fresh a-bedde.
But, by that ilke lord that for us bledde,
For his honour, my-self for to arraye,
A Sonday next, I moste nedes paye
An hundred frankes, or elles am I lorn.
Yet were me lever that I were unborn
Than me were doon a sclaundre or vileinye;
And if myn housbond eek it mighte espye,
I nere but lost, and therfore I yow preye
Lene me this somme, or elles moot I deye.
Daun Iohn, I seye, lene me thise hundred frankes;
Pardee, I wol nat faille yow my thankes,
If that yow list to doon that I yow praye.
For at a certein day I wol yow paye,
And doon to yow what plesance and servyce
That I may doon, right as yow list devyse.
And but I do, god take on me vengeance
As foul as ever had Geniloun of France!'

This gentil monk answerde in this manere;
'Now, trewely, myn owene lady dere,
I have,' quod he, 'on yow so greet a routhe,
That I yow swere and plighte yow my trouthe,
That whan your housbond is to Flaundres fare,
I wol delivere yow out of this care;
For I wol bringe yow an hundred frankes.'
And with that word he caughte hir by the flankes,
And hir embraceth harde, and kiste hir ofte.
'Goth now your wey,' quod he, 'al stille and softe,
And lat us dyne as sone as that ye may;
For by my chilindre it is pryme of day.
Goth now, and beeth as trewe as I shal be.'
'Now, elles god forbede, sire,' quod she,
And forth she gooth, as Iolif as a pye,
And bad the cokes that they sholde hem hye,
So that men mighte dyne, and that anon.
Up to hir housbonde is this wyf y-gon,
And knokketh at his countour boldely.
'*Qui la?*' quod he. 'Peter! it am I,'
Quod she, 'what, sire, how longe wol ye faste?
How longe tyme wol ye rekene and caste
Your sommes, and your bokes, and your thinges?
The devel have part of alle swiche rekeninges!
Ye have y-nough, pardee, of goddes sonde;
Come doun to-day, and lat your bagges stonde.
Ne be ye nat ashamed that daun Iohn
Shal fasting al this day elenge goon?
What! lat us here a messe, and go we dyne.'
'Wyf,' quod this man, 'litel canstow devyne
The curious bisinesse that we have.
For of us chapmen, al-so god me save,
And by that lord that cleped is Seint Yve,

Scarsly amonges twelve ten shul thryve,
Continuelly, lastinge un-to our age.
We may wel make chere and good visage,
And dryve forth the world as it may be,
And kepen our estaat in privetee,
Til we be deed, or elles that we pleye
A pilgrimage, or goon out of the weye.
And therfor have I greet necessitee
Up-on this queinte world tavyse me;
For evermore we mote stonde in drede
Of hap and fortune in our chapmanhede.
To Flaundres wol I go to-morwe at day,
And come agayn, as sone as ever I may.
For which, my dere wyf, I thee biseke,
As be to every wight buxom and meke,
And for to kepe our good be curious,
And honestly governe wel our hous.
Thou hast y-nough, in every maner wyse,
That to a thrifty houshold may suffyse.
Thee lakketh noon array ne no vitaille,
Of silver in thy purs shaltow nat faille.'
And with that word his countour-dore he shette,
And doun he gooth, ne lenger wolde he lette,
But hastily a messe was ther seyd,
And spedily the tables were y-leyd,
And to the diner faste they hem spedde;
And richely this monk the chapman fedde.
At-after diner daun Iohn sobrely
This chapman took a-part, and prively
He seyde him thus, 'cosyn, it standeth so,
That wel I see to Brugges wol ye go.
God and seint Austin spede yow and gyde!
I prey yow, cosin, wysly that ye ryde;
Governeth yow also of your diete
Atemprely, and namely in this hete.
Bitwix us two nedeth no strange fare;
Fare-wel, cosyn; god shilde yow fro care.
If any thing ther be by day or night,
If it lye in my power and my might,
That ye me wol comande in any wyse,
It shal be doon, right as ye wol devyse.
O thing, er that ye goon, if it may be,
I wolde prey yow; for to lene me
An hundred frankes, for a wyke or tweye,
For certein beestes that I moste beye,
To store with a place that is oures.
God help me so, I wolde it were youres!
I shal nat faille surely of my day,
Nat for a thousand frankes, a myle-way.
But lat this thing be secree, I yow preye,
For yet to-night thise beestes moot I beye;
And fare-now wel, myn owene cosin dere,
Graunt mercy of your cost and of your chere.'
This noble marchant gentilly anon
Answerde, and seyde, 'o cosin myn, daun Iohn,
Now sikerly this is a smal requeste;
My gold is youres, whan that it yow leste.
And nat only my gold, but my chaffare;
Take what yow list, god shilde that ye spare.
But o thing is, ye knowe it wel y-nogh,
Of chapmen, that hir moneye is hir plogh.
We may creaunce whyl we have a name,
But goldlees for to be, it is no game.
Paye it agayn whan it lyth in your ese;
After my might ful fayn wolde I yow plese.'
Thise hundred frankes he fette forth anon,
And prively he took hem to daun Iohn.
No wight in al this world wiste of this lone,
Savinge this marchant and daun Iohn allone.
They drinke, and speke, and rome a whyle and pleye,
Til that daun Iohn rydeth to his abbeye.
The morwe cam, and forth this marchant rydeth
To Flaundres-ward; his prentis wel him gydeth,
Til he cam in-to Brugges merily.
Now gooth this marchant faste and bisily
Aboute his nede, and byeth and creaunceth.
He neither pleyeth at the dees ne daunceth;
But as a marchant, shortly for to telle,
He let his lyf, and there I lete him dwelle.

The Sonday next this Marchant was agon,
To Seint Denys y-comen is daun Iohn,
With crowne and berd all fresh and newe y-shave.
In al the hous ther nas so litel a knave,
Ne no wight elles, that he nas ful fayn,
For that my lord daun Iohn was come agayn.
And shortly to the point right for to gon,
This faire wyf accorded with daun Iohn,
That for thise hundred frankes he sholde al night
Have hir in his armes bolt-upright;
And this acord parfourned was in dede.
In mirthe al night a bisy lyf they lede
Til it was day, that daun Iohn wente his way,
And bad the meynee 'fare-wel, have good day!'
For noon of hem, ne no wight in the toun,
Hath of daun Iohn right no suspecioun.
And forth he rydeth hoom to his abbeye,
Or where him list; namore of him I seye.
This marchant, whan that ended was the faire,
To Seint Denys he gan for to repaire,
And with his wyf he maketh feste and chere,
And telleth hir that chaffare is so dere,
That nedes moste he make a chevisaunce.
For he was bounde in a reconissaunce
To paye twenty thousand sheeld anon.
For which this marchant is to Paris gon,
To borwe of certein frendes that he hadde
A certein frankes; and somme with him he ladde.
And whan that he was come in-to the toun,
For greet chertee and greet affecciouu,
Un-to daun Iohn he gooth him first, to pleye;
Nat for to axe or borwe of him moneye,
But for to wite and seen of his welfare,
And for to tellen him of his chaffare,
As freendes doon whan they ben met y-fere.
Daun Iohn him maketh feste and mery chere;
And he him tolde agayn ful specially,
How he hadde wel y-boght and graciously,
Thanked be god, al hool his marchandyse.
Save that he moste, in alle maner wyse,
Maken a chevisaunce, as for his beste,
And thanne he sholde been in Ioye and reste.
Daun Iohn answerde, 'certes, I am fayn
That ye in hele ar comen hoom agayn.
And if that I were riche, as have I blisse,
Of twenty thousand sheeld shold ye nat misse,
For ye so kindely this other day
Lente me gold; and as I can and may,
I thanke yow, by god and by seint Iame!
But nathelees I took un-to our dame,
Your wyf at hoom, the same gold ageyn
Upon your bench; she woot it wel, certeyn,
By certein tokenes that I can hir telle.
Now, by your leve, I may no lenger dwelle,
Our abbot wol out of this toun anon;
And in his companye moot I gon.
Grete wel our dame, myn owene nece swete,
And fare-wel, dere cosin, til we mete!'
This Marchant, which that was ful war and wys,
Creaunced hath, and payd eek in Parys,
To certeyn Lumbardes, redy in hir hond,
The somme of gold, and gat of hem his bond;
And hoom he gooth, mery as a papeiay.
For wel he knew he stood in swich array,
That nedes moste he winne in that viage
A thousand frankes above al his costage.
His wyf ful redy mette him atte gate,
As she was wont of old usage algate,
And al that night in mirthe they bisette;
For he was riche and cleerly out of dette.
Whan it was day, this marchant gan embrace
His wyf al newe, and kiste hir on hir face,
And up he gooth and maketh it ful tough.
'Namore,' quod she, 'by god, ye have y-nough!'

And wantounly agayn with him she pleyde;
Til, atte laste, that this Marchant seyde,
'By god,' quod he, 'I am a litel wrooth
With yow, my wyf, al-thogh it be me looth.
And woot ye why? by god, as that I gesse,
That ye han maad a maner straungenesse
Bitwixen me and my cosyn daun Iohn.
Ye sholde han warned me, er I had gon,
That he yow hadde an hundred frankes payed
By redy tokene; and heeld him yvel apayed,
For that I to him spak of chevisaunce,
Me semed so, as by his contenaunce.
But nathelees, by god our hevene king,
I thoghte nat to axe of him no-thing.
I prey thee, wyf, ne do namore so;
Tel me alwey, er that I fro thee go,
If any dettour hath in myn absence
Y-payëd thee; lest, thurgh thy necligence,
I mighte him axe a thing that he hath payed.'
This wyf was nat afered nor affrayed,
But boldely she seyde, and that anon:
'Marie, I defye the false monk, daun Iohn!
I kepe nat of hise tokenes never a deel;
He took me certein gold, that woot I weel!
What! yvel thedom on his monkes snoute!
For, god it woot, I wende, withouten doute,
That he had yeve it me bycause of yow,
To doon ther-with myn honour and my prow,
For cosinage, and eek for bele chere
That he hath had ful ofte tymes here.
But sith I see I stonde in this disioint,
I wol answere yow shortly, to the point.
Ye han mo slakker dettours than am I!
For I wol paye yow wel and redily
Fro day to day; and, if so be I faille,
I am your wyf; score it up-on my taille,
And I shal paye, as sone as ever I may.
For, by my trouthe, I have on myn array,
And nat on wast, bistowed every deel.
And for I have bistowed it so weel
For your honour, for goddes sake, I seye,
As be nat wrooth, but lat us laughe and pleye.
Ye shal my Ioly body have to wedde;
By god, I wol nat paye yow but a-bedde.
Forgive it me, myn owene spouse dere;
Turne hiderward and maketh bettre chere.'
This marchant saugh ther was no remedye,
And, for to chyde, it nere but greet folye,
Sith that the thing may not amended be.
'Now, wyf,' he seyde, 'and I foryeve it thee;
But, by thy lyf, ne be namore so large;
Keep bet our good, this yeve I thee in charge.'
Thus endeth now my tale, and god us sende
Taling y-nough un-to our lyves ende.
Amen.

Here endeth the Shipmannes Tale.

THE PRIORESS'S PROLOGUE.

Bihold the mery wordes of the Host to the Shipman and to the lady Prioresse.

'WEL seyd, by *corpus dominus*,' quod our hoste,
'Now longe moot thou sayle by the coste,
Sir gentil maister, gentil marineer!
God yeve this monk a thousand last quad yeer!
A ha! felawes! beth ware of swiche a Iape!
The monk putte in the mannes hood an ape,
And in his wyves eek, by seint Austin!
Draweth no monkes more un-to your in.
But now passe over, and lat us seke aboute,
Who shal now telle first, of al this route,

Another tale;' and with that word he sayde,
As curteisly as it had been a mayde,
'My lady Prioresse, by your leve,
So that I wiste I sholde yow nat greve,
I wolde demen that ye tellen sholde
A tale next, if so were that ye wolde.
Now wol ye vouche-sauf, my lady dere?'
'Gladly,' quod she, and seyde as ye shal here.

Explicit.

THE PRIORESSES TALE.

The Prologe of the Prioresses Tale.

Domine, dominus noster.

O LORD our lord, thy name how merveillous
Is in this large worlde y-sprad — quod she: —
For noght only thy laude precious
Parfourned is by men of dignitee,
But by the mouth of children thy bountee
Parfourned is, for on the brest soukinge
Som tyme shewen they thyn heryinge.

Wherfor in laude, as I best can or may,
Of thee, and of the whyte lily flour
Which that thee bar, and is a mayde alway,
To telle a storie I wol do my labour;
Not that I may encresen hir honour;
For she hir-self is honour, and the rote
Of bountee, next hir sone, and soules bote. —

O moder mayde! O mayde moder free!
O bush unbrent, brenninge in Moyses sighte,
That ravisedest doun fro the deitee,
Thurgh thyn humblesse, the goost that in thalighte,
Of whos vertu, whan he thyn herte lighte,
Conceived was the fadres sapience,
Help me to telle it in thy reverence!

Lady! thy bountee, thy magnificence,
Thy vertu, and thy grete humilitee
Ther may no tonge expresse in no science;
For som-tyme, lady, er men praye to thee,
Thou goost biforn of thy benignitee,
And getest us the light, thurgh thy preyere,
To gyden us un-to thy sone so dere.

My conning is so wayk, O blisful quene,
For to declare thy grete worthinesse,
That I ne may the weighte nat sustene,
But as a child of twelf monthe old, or lesse,
That can unnethes any word expresse,
Right so fare I, and therfor I yow preye,
Gydeth my song that I shal of yow seye.

Explicit.

Here biginneth the Prioresses Tale.

Ther was in Asie, in a greet citee,
Amonges Cristen folk, a Iewerye,
Sustened by a lord of that contree
For foule usure and lucre of vilanye,
Hateful to Crist and to his companye;
And thurgh the strete men mighte ryde or wende,
For it was free, and open at either ende.

A litel scole of Cristen folk ther stood
Doun at the ferther ende, in which ther were
Children an heep, y-comen of Cristen blood,
That lerned in that scole yeer by yere
Swich maner doctrine as men used there,
This is to seyn, to singen and to rede,
As smale children doon in hir childhede.

Among thise children was a widwes sone,
A litel clergeon, seven yeer of age,
That day by day to scole was his wone,
And eek also, wher-as he saugh thimage

Of Cristes moder, hadde he in usage,
As him was taught, to knele adoun and seye
His *Ave Marie*, as he goth by the weye.

Thus hath this widwe hir litel sone y-taught
Our blisful lady, Cristes moder dere,
To worshipe ay, and he forgat it naught,
For sely child wol alday sone lere;
But ay, whan I remembre on this matere,
Seint Nicholas stant ever in my presence,
For he so yong to Crist did reverence.

This litel child, his litel book lerninge,
As he sat in the scole at his prymer,
He *Alma redemptoris* herde singe,
As children lerned hir antiphoner;
And, as he dorste, he drough him ner and ner,
And herkned ay the wordes and the note,
Till he the firste vers coude al by rote.

Noght wiste he what this Latin was to seye,
For he so yong and tendre was of age;
But on a day his felaw gan he preye
Texpounden him this song in his langage,
Or telle him why this song was in usage;
This preyde he him to construe and declare
Ful ofte tyme upon his knowes bare.

His felaw, which that elder was than he,
Answerde him thus: 'this song, I have herd seye,
Was maked of our blisful lady free,
Hir to salue, and eek hir for to preye
To been our help and socour whan we deye.
I can no more expounde in this matere;
I lerne song, I can but smal grammere.'

And is this song maked in reverence
Of Cristes moder?' seyde this innocent;
'Now certes, I wol do my diligence
To conne it al, er Cristemasse is went;
Though that I for my prymer shal be shent,
And shal be beten thryës in an houre,
I wol it conne, our lady for to honoure.'

His felaw taughte him homward prively,
Fro day to day, til he coude it by rote,
And than he song it wel and boldely
Fro word to word, acording with the note;
Twyës a day it passed thurgh his throte,
To scoleward and homward whan he wente;
On Cristes moder set was his entente.

As I have seyd, thurgh-out the Iewerye
This litel child, as he cam to and fro,
Ful merily than wolde he singe, and crye
O Alma redemptoris ever-mo.
The swetnes hath his herte perced so
Of Cristes moder, that, to hir to preye,
He can nat stinte of singing by the weye.

Our firste fo, the serpent Sathanas,
That hath in Iewes herte his waspes nest,
Up swal, and seide, 'o Hebraik peple, allas!
Is this to yow a thing that is honest,
That swich a boy shal walken as him lest
In your despyt, and singe of swich sentence,
Which is agayn your lawes reverence?'

Fro thennes forth the Iewes han conspyred
This innocent out of this world to chace;
An homicyde ther-to han they hyred,
That in an aley hadde a privee place;
And as the child gan for-by for to pace,
This cursed Iew him hente and heeld him faste,
And kitte his throte, and in a pit him caste.

I seye that in a wardrobe they him threwe
Wher-as these Iewes purgen hir entraille.
O cursed folk of Herodes al newe,
What may your yvel entente yow availle?
Mordre wol out, certein, it wol nat faille,

And namely ther thonour of god shal sprede,
The blood out cryeth on your cursed dede.

'O martir, souded to virginitee,
Now maystou singen, folwing ever in oon
The whyte lamb celestial,' quod she,
'Of which the grete evangelist, seint Iohn,
In Pathmos wroot, which seith that they that goon
Biforn this lamb, and singe a song al newe,
That never, fleshly, wommen they ne knewe.'

This povre widwe awaiteth al that night
After hir litel child, but he cam noght;
For which, as sone as it was dayes light,
With face pale of drede and bisy thoght,
She hath at scole and elles-wher him soght,
Til finally she gan so fer espye
That he last seyn was in the Iewerye.

With modres pitee in hir brest enclosed,
She gooth, as she were half out of hir minde,
To every place wher she hath supposed
By lyklihede hir litel child to finde;
And ever on Cristes moder meke and kinde
She cryde, and atte laste thus she wroghte,
Among the cursed Iewes she him soghte.

She frayneth and she preyeth pitously
To every Iew that dwelte in thilke place,
To telle hir, if hir child wente oght for-by.
They seyde, 'nay'; but Iesu, of his grace,
Yaf in hir thought, inwith a litel space,
That in that place after hir sone she cryde,
Wher he was casten in a pit bisyde.

O grete god, that parfournest thy laude
By mouth of innocents, lo heer thy might!

This gemme of chastitee, this emeraude,
And eek of martirdom the ruby bright,
Ther he with throte y-corven lay upright,
He '*Alma redemptoris*' gan to singe
So loude, that al the place gan to ringe.

The Cristen folk, that thurgh the strete wente,
In coomen, for to wondre up-on this thing,
And hastily they for the provost sente;
He cam anon with-outen tarying,
And herieth Crist that is of heven king,
And eek his moder, honour of mankinde,
And after that, the Iewes leet he binde.

This child with pitous lamentacioun
Up-taken was, singing his song alway;
And with honour of greet processioun
They carien him un-to the nexte abbay.
His moder swowning by the bere lay;
Unnethe might the peple that was there
This newe Rachel bringe fro his bere.

With torment and with shamful deth echon
This provost dooth thise Iewes for to sterve
That of this mordre wiste, and that anon;
He nolde no swich cursednesse observe.
Yvel shal have, that yvel wol deserve.
Therfor with wilde hors he dide hem drawe,
And after that he heng hem by the lawe.

Up-on his bere ay lyth this innocent
Biforn the chief auter, whyl masse laste,
And after that, the abbot with his covent
Han sped hem for to burien him ful faste;
And whan they holy water on him caste,
Yet spak this child, whan spreynd was holy water,
And song — '*O Alma redemptoris mater!*'

This abbot, which that was an holy man
As monkes been, or elles oghten be,
This yonge child to conjure he bigan,
And seyde, 'o dere child, I halse thee,

In vertu of the holy Trinitee,
Tell me what is thy cause for to singe,
Sith that thy throte is cut, to my seminge?'

'My throte is cut un-to my nekke-boon,'
Seyde this child, 'and, as by wey of kinde,
I sholde have deyed, ye, longe tyme agoon,
But Iesu Crist, as ye in bokes finde,
Wil that his glorie laste and be in minde,
And, for the worship of his moder dere,
Yet may I singe "*O Alma*" loude and clere.

This welle of mercy, Cristes moder swete,
I lovede alwey, as after my conninge;
And whan that I my lyf sholde forlete,
To me she cam, and bad me for to singe
This antem verraily in my deyinge,
As ye han herd, and, whan that I had songe,
Me thoughte, she leyde a greyn up-on my tonge.

Wherfor I singe, and singe I moot certeyn
In honour of that blisful mayden free,
Til fro my tonge of-taken is the greyn;
And afterward thus seyde she to me,
"My litel child, now wol I fecche thee
Whan that the greyn is fro thy tonge y-take;
Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake."'

This holy monk, this abbot, him mene I,
His tonge out-caughte, and took a-wey the greyn,
And he yaf up the goost ful softely.
And whan this abbot had this wonder seyn,
His salte teres trikled doun as reyn,
And gruf he fil al plat up-on the grounde,
And stille he lay as he had been y-bounde.

The covent eek lay on the pavement
Weping, and herien Cristes moder dere,
And after that they ryse, and forth ben went,
And toke awey this martir fro his bere,
And in a tombe of marbul-stones clere
Enclosen they his litel body swete;
Ther he is now, god leve us for to mete.

O yonge Hugh of Lincoln, slayn also
With cursed Iewes, as it is notable,
For it nis but a litel whyle ago;
Preye eek for us, we sinful folk unstable,
That, of his mercy, god so merciable
On us his grete mercy multiplye,
For reverence of his moder Marye. Amen.

Here is ended the Prioresses Tale.

PROLOGUE TO SIR THOPAS.

Bihold the murye wordes of the Host to Chaucer.

WHAN seyd was al this miracle, every man
As sobre was, that wonder was to se,
Til that our hoste Iapen tho bigan,
And than at erst he loked up-on me,
And seyde thus, 'what man artow?' quod he;
'Thou lokest as thou woldest finde an hare,
For ever up-on the ground I see thee stare.

Approche neer, and loke up merily.
Now war yow, sirs, and lat this man have place;
He in the waast is shape as wel as I;
This were a popet in an arm tenbrace
For any womman, smal and fair of face.
He semeth elvish by his contenaunce,
For un-to no wight dooth he daliaunce.

Sey now somwhat, sin other folk han sayd;
Tel us a tale of mirthe, and that anoon;'—

'Hoste,' quod I, 'ne beth nat yvel apayd,
For other tale certes can I noon,
But of a ryme I lerned longe agoon.'
'Ye, that is good,' quod he; 'now shul we here
Som deyntee thing, me thinketh by his chere.'

Explicit.

SIR THOPAS.

Here biginneth Chaucer's Tale of Thopas.

LISTETH, lordes, in good entent,
And I wol telle verrayment
Of mirthe and of solas;
Al of a knyght was fair and gent
In bataille and in tourneyment,
His name was sir Thopas.

Y-born he was in fer contree,
In Flaundres, al biyonde the see,
At Popering, in the place;
His fader was a man ful free,
And lord he was of that contree,
As it was goddes grace.

Sir Thopas wex a doghty swayn,
Whyt was his face as payndemayn,
His lippes rede as rose;
His rode is lyk scarlet in grayn,
And I yow telle in good certayn,
He hadde a semely nose.

His heer, his berd was lyk saffroun,
That to his girdel raughte adoun;
His shoon of Cordewane.
Of Brugges were his hosen broun,
His robe was of ciclatoun,
That coste many a lane.

He coude hunte at wilde deer,
And ryde an hauking for riveer,
With grey goshauk on honde;
Ther-to he was a good archeer,
Of wrastling was ther noon his peer,
Ther any ram shal stonde.

Ful many a mayde, bright in bour,
They moorne for him, paramour,
Whan hem were bet to slepe;
But he was chast and no lechour,
And sweet as is the bremble-flour
That bereth the rede hepe.

And so bifel up-on a day,
For sothe, as I yow telle may,
Sir Thopas wolde out ryde;
He worth upon his stede gray,
And in his honde a launcegay,
A long swerd by his syde.

He priketh thurgh a fair forest,
Ther-inne is many a wilde best,
Ye, bothe bukke and hare;
And, as he priketh north and est,
I telle it yow, him hadde almest
Bitid a sory care.

Ther springen herbes grete and smale,
The lycorys and cetewale,
And many a clowe-gilofre;
And notemuge to putte in ale,
Whether it be moyste or stale,
Or for to leye in cofre.

The briddes singe, it is no nay,
The sparhauk and the papeiay,
That Ioye it was to here;
The thrustelcok made eek his lay,
The wodedowve upon the spray
She sang ful loude and clere.

Sir Thopas fil in love-longinge
Al whan he herde the thrustel singe,
And priked as he were wood:
His faire stede in his prikinge
So swatte that men mighte him wringe,
His sydes were al blood.

Sir Thopas eek so wery was
For prikinge on the softe gras,
So fiers was his corage,

That doun he leyde him in that plas
To make his stede som solas,
And yaf him good forage.

'O seinte Marie, *benedicite!*
What eyleth this love at me
To binde me so sore?
Me dremed al this night, pardee,
An elf-queen shal my lemman be,
And slepe under my gore.

An elf-queen wol I love, y-wis,
For in this world no womman is
Worthy to be my make
In toune;
Alle othere wommen I forsake,
And to an elf-queen I me take
By dale and eek by doune!'

In-to his sadel he clamb anoon,
And priketh over style and stoon
An elf-queen for tespye,
Til he so longe had riden and goon
That he fond, in a privee woon,
The contree of Fairye
So wilde;
For in that contree was ther noon
That to him dorste ryde or goon,
Neither wyf ne childe.

Til that ther cam a greet geaunt,
His name was sir Olifaunt,
A perilous man of dede;
He seyde, 'child, by Termagaunt,
But-if thou prike out of myn haunt,
Anon I slee thy stede
With mace.
Heer is the queen of Fayërye,
With harpe and pype and simphonye
Dwelling in this place.'

The child seyde, 'al-so mote I thee,
Tomorwe wol I mete thee
Whan I have myn armoure;
And yet I hope, *par ma fay*,
That thou shalt with this launcegay
Abyen it ful soure;
Thy mawe
Shal I percen, if I may,
Er it be fully pryme of day,
For heer thou shalt be slawe.'

Sir Thopas drow abak ful faste;
This geaunt at him stones caste
Out of a fel staf-slinge;
But faire escapeth child Thopas,
And al it was thurgh goddes gras,
And thurgh his fair beringe.

Yet listeth, lordes, to my tale
Merier than the nightingale,
For now I wol yow roune
How sir Thopas with sydes smale,
Priking over hil and dale,
Is come agayn to toune.

His merie men comanded he
To make him bothe game and glee,
For nedes moste he fighte
With a geaunt with hevedes three,
For paramour and Iolitee
Of oon that shoon ful brighte.

'Do come,' he seyde, 'my minstrales,
And gestours, for to tellen tales
Anon in myn arminge;
Of romances that been royales,
Of popes and of cardinales,
And eek of love-lykinge.'

They fette him first the swete wyn,
And mede eek in a maselyn,
And royal spicerye
Of gingebreed that was ful fyn,
And lycorys, and eek comyn,
With sugre that is so trye.

He dide next his whyte lere
Of elooth of lake fyn and clere
A breech and eek a sherte;
And next his sherte an aketoun,
And over that an habergeoun
For percinge of his herte;

And over that a fyn hauberk,
Was al y-wroght of Iewes werk,
Ful strong it was of plate;
And over that his cote-armour
As whyt as is a lily-flour,
In which he wol debate.

His sheeld was al of gold so reed,
And ther-in was a bores heed,
A charbocle bisyde;

And there he swoor, on ale and breed,
How that 'the geaunt shal be deed,
Bityde what bityde!'

His Iambeux were of quirboilly,
His swerdes shethe of yvory,
His helm of laton bright;
His sadel was of rewel-boon,
His brydel as the sonne shoon,
Or as the mone light.

His spere was of fyn ciprees,
That bodeth werre, and no-thing pees,
The heed ful sharpe y-grounde;
His stede was al dappel-gray,
It gooth an ambel in the way
Ful softely and rounde
In londe.
Lo, lordes myne, heer is a fit!
If ye wol any more of it,
To telle it wol I fonde.

[*The Second Fit.*]

Now hold your mouth, *par charitee*,
Bothe knight and lady free,
And herkneth to my spelle;
Of bataille and of chivalry,
And of ladyes love-drury
Anon I wol yow telle.

Men speke of romances of prys,
Of Horn child and of Ypotys,
Of Bevis and sir Gy,
Of sir Libeux and Pleyn-damour;
But sir Thopas, he bereth the flour
Of royal chivalry.

His gode stede al he bistrood,
And forth upon his wey he glood
As sparkle out of the bronde;
Up-on his crest he bar a tour,
And ther-in stiked a lily-flour,
God shilde his cors fro shonde!

And for he was a knight auntrous,
He nolde slepen in non hous,
But liggen in his hode;
His brighte helm was his wonger,
And by him baiteth his dextrer
Of herbes fyne and gode.

Him-self drank water of the wel,
As did the knight sir Percivel,
So worthy under wede,
Til on a day ——

Here the Host stinteth Chaucer of his Tale of Thopas.

PROLOGUE TO MELIBEUS.

'No more of this, for goddes dignitee,'
Quod oure hoste, 'for thou makest me
So wery of thy verray lewednesse
That, also wisly god my soule blesse,
Myn eres aken of thy drasty speche;
Now swiche a rym the devel I biteche!
This may wel be rym dogerel,' quod he.
'Why so?' quod I, 'why wiltow lette me
More of my tale than another man,
Sin that it is the beste rym I can?'
'By god,' quod he, 'for pleynly, at a word,
Thy drasty ryming is nat worth a tord;
Thou doost nought elles but despendest tyme,
Sir, at o word, thou shalt no lenger ryme.
Lat see wher thou canst tellen aught in geste,
Or telle in prose somwhat at the leste
In which ther be som mirthe or som doctryne.'
'Gladly,' quod I, 'by goddes swete pyne,
I wol yow telle a litel thing in prose,
That oghte lyken yow, as I suppose,
Of elles, certes, ye been to daungerous.
It is a moral tale vertuous,
Al be it told som-tyme in sondry wyse
Of sondry folk, as I shal yow devyse.
As thus; ye woot that every evangelist,
That telleth us the peyne of Iesu Crist,

Ne saith nat al thing as his felaw dooth,
But natheles, hir sentence is al sooth,
And alle acorden as in hir sentence,
Al be ther in hir telling difference.
For somme of hem seyn more, and somme lesse,
When they his pitous passioun expresse;
I mene of Marke, Mathew, Luk and Iohn;
But doutelees hir sentence is al oon.
Therfor, lordinges alle, I yow biseche,
If that ye thinke I varie as in my speche,
As thus, though that I telle som-what more

Of proverbes, than ye han herd bifore,
Comprehended in this litel tretis here,
To enforce with the theffect of my matere,
And thogh I nat the same wordes seye
As ye han herd, yet to yow alle I preye,
Blameth me nat; for, as in my sentence,
Ye shul not fynden moche difference
Fro the sentence of this tretis lyte
After the which this mery tale I wryte.
And therfor herkneth what that I shal seye,
And lat me tellen al my tale, I preye.'

Explicit.

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS.

[The mark / denotes the lines.]

Here biginneth Chaucers Tale of Melibee.

§ 1. A yong man called Melibeus, mighty and riche, bigat up-on his wyf that called was Prudence, a doghter which that called was Sophie. /

§ 2. Upon a day bifel that he for his desport is went in-to the feeldes him to pleye. / His wyf and eek his doghter hath he left inwith his hous, of which the dores weren fast y-shette. / Thre of his olde foos han it espyed, and setten laddres to the walles of his hous, and by the windowes ben entred, / and betten his wyf, and wounded his doghter with fyve mortal woundes in fyve sondry places; / this is to seyn, in hir feet, in hir handes, in hir eres, in hir nose, and in hir mouth; and leften hir for deed, and wenten awey. /

§ 3. When Melibeus retourned was in-to his hous, and saugh al this meschief, he, lyk a mad man, rendinge his clothes, gan to wepe and crye. /

§ 4. Prudence his wyf, as ferforth as she dorste, bisoghte him of his weping for to stinte; / but nat forthy he gan to crye and wepen ever lenger the more. /

§ 5. This noble wyf Prudence remembered hir upon the sentence of Ovide, in his book that cleped is The Remedie of Love, wher-as he seith; / 'he is a fool that destourbeth the moder to wepen in the deeth of hir child, til she have wept hir fille, as for a certein tyme; / and thanne shal man doon his diligence with amiable wordes hir to reconforte, and preyen hir of hir weping for to stinte.' / For which resoun this noble wyf Prudence suffred hir housbond for to wepe and crye as for a certein space; / and whan she saugh hir tyme, she seyde him in this wyse. 'Allas, my lord,' quod she, 'why make ye your-self for to be lyk a fool? / For sothe, it aperteneth nat to a wys man, to maken swiche a sorwe. / Your doghter, with the grace of god, shal warisshe and escape. / And al were it so that she right now were

deed, ye ne oghte nat as for hir deeth your-self to destroye. / Senek seith: "the wise man shal nat take to greet disconfort for the deeth of his children, / but certes he sholde suffren it in pacience, as wel as he abydeth the deeth of his owene propre persone." ' /

§ 6. This Melibeus answerde anon and seyde, 'What man,' quod he, 'sholde of his weping stinte, that hath so greet a cause for to wepe? / Iesu Crist, our lord, himself wepte for the deeth of Lazarus his freend.' / Prudence answerde, 'Certes, wel I woot, attempree weping is no-thing defended to him that sorweful is, amonges folk in sorwe, but it is rather graunted him to wepe. / The Apostle Paul un-to the Romayns wryteth, "man shal reioyse with hem that maken Ioye, and wepen with swich folk as wepen." / But thogh attempree weping be y-graunted, outrageous weping certes is defended. / Mesure of weping sholde be considered, after the lore that techeth us Senek. / "Whan that thy freend is deed," quod he, "lat nat thyne eyen to moyste been of teres, ne to muche drye; althogh the teres come to thyne eyen, lat hem nat falle." / And whan thou hast forgoon thy freend, do diligence to gete another freend; and this is more wysdom than for to wepe for thy freend which that thou hast lorn; for ther-inne is no bote. / And therfore, if ye governe yow by sapience, put awey sorwe out of your herte. / Remembre yow that Iesus Syrak seith: "a man that is Ioyous and glad in herte, it him conserveth florisshing in his age; but soothly sorweful herte maketh his bones drye." / He seith eek thus: "that sorwe in herte sleeth ful many a man." / Salomon seith: "that, right as motthes in the shepes flees anoyeth to the clothes, and the smale wormes to the tree, right so anoyeth sorwe to the herte." / Wherfore us oghte, as wel in the deeth of our children as in the losse of our goodes temporels, have pacience. /

§ 7. Remembre yow up-on the pacient Iob, whan he hadde lost his children and his temporel substance, and in his body endured and receyved ful many a grevous tribulacioun; yet seyde he thus: / "our lord hath yeven it me, our lord hath biraft it me; right as our lord hath wold, right so it is doon; blessed be the name of our lord." ' / To thise foreseide thinges answerde Melibeus un-to his wyf Prudence: 'Alle thy wordes,' quod he, 'been sothe, and ther-to profitable; but trewely myn herte is troubled with this sorwe so grevously, that I noot what to done.' / 'Lat calle,' quod Prudence, 'thy trewe freendes alle, and thy linage whiche that been wyse; telleth your cas, and herkneth what they seye in conseiling, and yow governe after hir sentence. / Salomon seith: "werk alle thy thinges by conseil, and thou shalt never repente." ' /

§ 8. Thanne, by the conseil of his wyf Prudence, this Melibeus leet callen a greet congregacioun of folk; / as surgiens, phisiciens, olde folk and yonge, and somme of hise olde enemys reconsiled as by hir semblaunt to his love and in-to his grace; / and ther-with-al ther comen somme of hise neighebores that diden him reverence more for drede than for love, as it happeth ofte. / Ther comen also ful many subtile flatterers, and wyse advocats lerned in the lawe. /

§ 9. And whan this folk togidre assembled weren, this Melibeus in sorweful wyse shewed hem his cas; / and by the manere of his speche it semed that in herte he bar a cruel ire, redy to doon vengeaunce upon hise foos, and sodeynly desired that the werre sholde biginne; / but nathelees yet axed he hir conseil upon this matere. / A surgien, by

licence and assent of swiche as weren wyse, up roos and un-to Melibeus seyde as ye may here. /

§ 10. 'Sir,' quod he, 'as to us surgiens aperteneth, that we do to every wight the beste that we can, wher-as we been with-holde, and to our pacients that we do no damage; / wherfore it happeth, many tyme and ofte, that whan twey men han everich wounded other, oon same surgien heleth hem bothe; / wherefore un-to our art it is nat pertinent to norice werre ne parties to supporte. / But certes, as to the warisshinge of your doghter, al-be-it so that she perilously be wounded, we shullen do so ententif bisinesse fro day to night, that with the grace of god she shal be hool and sound as sone as is possible.' / Almost right in the same wyse the phisiciens answerden, save that they seyden a fewe wordes more: / 'That, right as maladyes been cured by hir contraries, right so shul men warisshe were by vengeaunce.' / His neighebores, ful of envye, his feyned freendes that semeden reconsiled, and his flatereres, / maden semblant of weping, and empeireden and agreggeden muchel of this matere, in preising greetly Melibee of might, of power, of richesse, and of freendes, despysinge the power of his adversaries, / and seiden outrely that he anon sholde wreken him on his foos and biginne werre. /

§ 11. Up roos thanne an advocat that was wys, by leve and by conseil of othere that were wyse, and seyde: / 'Lordinges, the nede for which we been assembled in this place is a ful hevy thing and an heigh matere, / by-cause of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that hath be doon, and eek by resoun of the grete damages that in tyme cominge been possible to fallen for this same cause; / and eek by resoun of the grete richesse and power of the parties bothe; / for the whiche resouns it were a ful greet peril to erren in this matere. / Wherfore, Melibeus, this is our sentence: we conseille yow aboven alle thing, that right anon thou do thy diligence in kepinge of thy propre persone, in swich a wyse that thou ne wante noon espye ne wacche, thy body for to save. / And after that we conseille, that in thyn hous thou sette suffisant garnisoun, so that they may as well thy body as thyn hous defende. / But certes, for to moeve werre, or sodeynly for to doon vengeaunce, we may nat demen in so litel tyme that it were profitable. / Wherfore we axen leyser and espace to have deliberacioun in this cas to deme. / For the commune proverbe seith thus: "he that sone demeth, sone shal repente." / And eek men seyn that thilke luge is wys, that sone understondeth a matere and luggeth by leyser. / For al-be-it so that alle tarying be anoyful, algates it is nat to repreve in yevinge of lugement, ne in vengeance-taking, whan it is suffisant and resonable. / And that shewed our lord Iesu Crist by ensample; for whan that the womman that was taken in avoutrie was broght in his presence, to knowen what sholde be doon with hir persone, al-be-it so that he wiste wel him-self what that he wolde answere, yet ne wolde he nat answere sodeynly, but he wolde have deliberacioun, and in the ground he wroot twyes. / And by thise causes we axen deliberacioun, and we shal thanne, by the grace of god, conseille thee thing that shal be profitable.' /

§ 12. Up stirten thanne the yonge folk at-ones, and the moste partie of that companye han scorned the olde wyse men, and bigonnen to make noyse, and seyden: that, right so as whyl that iren is hoot, men sholden smyte, right so, men sholde wreken hir wronges whyle that they been fresshe and newe;

and with loud voys they cryden, 'werre! werre!' /

Up roos tho oon of thise olde wyse, and with his hand made contenaunce that men sholde holden hem stille and yeven him audience. / 'Lordinges,' quod he, 'ther is ful many a man that cryeth "werre! werre!" that woot ful litel what werre amounteth. / Werre at his biginning hath so greet an entree and so large, that every wight may entre whan him lyketh, and lightly finde werre. / But, certes, what ende that shal ther-of bifalle, it is nat light to knowe. / For sothly, whan that werre is ones bigonne, ther is ful many a child unborn of his moder, that shal sterve yong bycause of that ilke werre, or elles live in sorwe and dye in wrecchednesse. / And ther-fore, er that any werre biginne, men moste have greet conseil and greet deliberacioun.' / And whan this olde man wende to enforcen his tale by resons, wel ny alle at-ones bigonne they to ryse for to breken his tale, and beden him ful ofte his wordes for to abregge. / For soothly, he that precheth to hem that listen nat heren his wordes, his sermon hem anoyeth. / For Iesus Syrak seith: that "musik in wepinge is anoyous thing;" this is to seyn: as muche availleth to speken bifore folk to whiche his speche anoyeth, as dooth to singe biforn him that wepeth. / And whan this wyse man saugh that him wanted audience, al shamefast he sette him doun agayn. / For Salomon seith: "ther-as thou ne mayst have noon audience, enforce thee nat to speke." / 'I see wel,' quod this wyse man, 'that the commune proverbe is sooth; that "good conseil wanteth whan it is most nede."' /

§ 13. Yet hadde this Melibeus in his conseil many folk, that prively in his ere conseilled him certeyn thing, and conseilled him the contrarie in generàl audience. /

Whan Melibeus hadde herd that the gretteste partie of his conseil weren accorded that he sholde maken werre, anoon he consented to hir conseilling, and fully affermed hir sentence. / Thanne dame Prudence, whan that she saugh how that hir housbonde shoop him for to wreken him on his foos, and to biginne werre, she in ful humble wyse, when she saugh hir tyme, seide him thise wordes: / 'My lord,' quod she, 'I yow biseche as hertely as I dar and can, ne haste yow nat to faste, and for alle guerdons as yeveth me audience. / For Piers Alfonce seith: "who-so that dooth to that other good or harm, haste thee nat to quyten it; for in this wyse thy freend wol abyde, and thyn enemy shal the lenger live in drede." / The proverbe seith: "he hasteth wel that wysely can abyde;" and in wikked haste is no profit.' /

§ 14. This Melibee answerde un-to his wyf Prudence: 'I purpose nat,' quod he, 'to werke by thy conseil, for many causes and resouns. For certes every wight wolde holde me thanne a fool; / this is to seyn, if I, for thy conseilling, wolde chaungen thinges that been ordeyned and affermed by so manye wyse. / Secoundly I seye, that alle wommen been wikke and noon good of hem alle. For "of a thousand men," seith Salomon, "I fond a good man: but certes, of alle wommen, good womman fond I never." / And also certes, if I governed me by thy conseil, it sholde seme that I hadde yeve to thee over me the maistrie; and god forbede that it so were. / For Iesus Syrak seith; "that if the wyf have maistrie, she is contrarious to hir housbonde." / And Salomon seith: "never in thy lyf, to thy wyf, ne to thy child, ne to thy freend, ne yeve no power over thy-self. For bettre it were that thy children aske of thy persone thinges that hem

nedeth, than thou see thy-self in the handes of thy children." / And also, if I wolde werke by thy conseilling, certes my conseilling moste som tyme be secree, til it were tyme that it moste be knowe; and this ne may noght be. / [For it is writen, that "the Ianglerie of wommen can hyden thinges that they witen noght." / Furthermore, the philosophre seith, "in wikked conseil wommen venquisshe men;" and for thise resouns I ne owe nat usen thy conseil.'] /

§ 15. Whanna dame Prudence, ful debonairly and with greet pacience, hadde herd al that hir housbonde lyked for to seye, thanne axed she of him licence for to speke, and seyde in this wyse. / 'My lord,' quod she, 'as to your firste resoun, certes it may lightly been answered. For I seye, that it is no folie to chaunge conseil whan the thing is chaunged; or elles whan the thing semeth otherweyes than it was biforn. / And more-over I seye, that though ye han sworn and bihight to perfourne your emprise, and nathelees ye weyve to perfourne thilke same emprise by Iuste cause, men sholde nat seyn therefore that ye were a lyer ne forsworn. / For the book seith, that "the wyse man maketh no lesing whan he turneth his corage to the bettre." / And al-be-it so that your emprise be establissed and ordeyned by greet multitude of folk, yet thar ye nat accomplice thilke same ordinaunce but yow lyke. / For the trouthe of thinges and the profit been rather founden in fewe folk that been wyse and ful of resoun, than by greet multitude of folk, ther every man cryeth and clatereth what that him lyketh. Soothly swich multitude is nat honeste. / As to the seconde resoun, where-as ye seyn that "alle wommen been wikke," save your grace, certes ye despysen alle wommen in this wyse; and "he that alle despyseth alle displeseth," as seith the book. / And Senek seith that "who-so wole have sapience, shal no man dispreise; but he shal gladly techen the science that he can, with-outen presumpcioun or pryde. / And swiche thinges as he nought ne can, he shal nat been ashamed to lerne hem and enquere of lasse folk than him-self." / And sir, that ther hath been many a good womman, may lightly be preved. / For certes, sir, our lord Iesu Crist wolde never have descended to be born of a womman, if alle wommen hadden ben wikke. / And after that, for the grete bountee that is in wommen, our lord Iesu Crist, whan he was risen fro deeth to lyve, appeered rather to a womman than to his apostles. / And though that Salomon seith, that "he ne fond never womman good," it folweth nat therfore that alle wommen ben wikke. / For though that he ne fond no good womman, certes, ful many another man hath founden many a womman ful good and trewe. / Or elles per-aventure the entente of Salomon was this; that, as in sovereyn bountee, he fond no womman; / this is to seyn, that ther is no wight that hath sovereyn bountee save god allone; as he him-self recordeth in his Evaungelie. / For ther nis no creature so good that him ne wanteth somwhat of the perfeccioun of god, that is his maker. / Your thridde resoun is this: ye seyn that "if ye governe yow by my conseil, it sholde seme that ye hadde yeve me the maistrie and the lordshipe over your persone." / Sir, save your grace, it is nat so. For if it were so, that no man sholde be conseilled but only of hem that hadden lordshipe and maistrie of his persone, men wolden nat be conseilled so ofte. / For soothly, thilke man that asketh conseil of a purpos, yet hath he free chois, wheither he wole werke by that conseil or noon. / And as to your fourthe resoun, ther ye seyn

that "the Ianglerie of wommen hath hid thinges that they woot noght," as who seith, that "a womman can nat hyde that she woot;" / sir, thise wordes been understonde of wommen that been Iangleresses and wikked; / of whiche wommen, men seyn that "three thinges dryven a man out of his hous; that is to seyn, smoke, dropping of reyn, and wikked wyves;" / and of swiche wommen seith Salomón, that, "it were bettre dwelle in desert, than with a womman that is riotous." / And sir, by your leve, that am nat I; / for ye han ful ofte assayed my grete silence and my gret pacience; and eek how wel that I can hyde and hele thinges that men oghte secreely to hyde. / And soothly, as to your fifthe resoun, wher-as ye seyn, that "in wikked conseil wommen venquisshe men;" god woot, thilke resoun stant here in no stede. / For understond now, ye asken conseil to do wikkednesse; / and if ye wole werken wikkednesse, and your wyf restreyneth thilke wikked purpos, and overcometh yow by resoun and by good conseil; / certes, your wyf oghte rather to be preised than y-blamed. / Thus sholde ye understonde the philosophre that seith, "in wikked conseil wommen venquisshen hir housbondes." / And ther-as ye blamen alle wommen and hir resouns, I shal shewe yow by manye ensamples that many a womman hath ben ful good, and yet been; and hir conseils ful hoolsome and profitable. / Eek som men han seyd, that "the conseillinge of wommen is outher to dere, or elles to litel of prys." / But al-be-it so, that ful many a womman is badde, and hir conseil vile and noght worth, yet han men founde ful many a good womman, and ful discrete and wise in conseillinge. / Lo, Iacob, by good conseil of his moder Rebekka, wan the benisoun of Ysaak his fader, and the lordshipe over alle his bretheren. / Iudith, by hir good conseil, delivered the citee of Bethulie, in which she dwelled, out of the handes of Olofernus, that hadde it biseged and wolde have al destroyed it. / Abigail delivered Nabal hir housbonde fro David the king, that wolde have slayn him, and apaysed the ire of the king by hir wit and by hir good conseilling. / Hester by hir good conseil enhaunced greetly the peple of god in the regne of Assuerus the king. / And the same bountee in good conseilling of many a good womman may men telle. / And moreover, whan our lord hadde creat Adam our forme-fader, he seyde in this wyse: / "it is nat good to been a man allone; make we to him an help semblable to himself." / Here may ye se that, if that wommen were nat goode, and hir conseils goode and profitable, / our lord god of hevene wolde never han wroght hem, ne called hem help of man, but rather confusioun of man. / And ther seyde ones a clerk in two vers: "what is bettre than gold? Iaspre. What is bettre than Iaspre? Wisdom. / And what is bettre than wisdom? Womman. And what is bettre than a good womman? Nothing." / And sir, by manye of othre resons may ye seen, that manye wommen been goode, and hir conseils goode and profitable. / And therfore sir, if ye wol triste to my conseil, I shal restore yow your doghter hool and sound. / And eek I wol do to yow so muche, that ye shul have honour in this cause.' /

§ 16. Whan Melibee hadde herd the wordes of his wyf Prudence, he seyde thus: / 'I see wel that the word of Salomon is sooth; he seith, that "wordes that been spoken discreetly by ordinaunce, been honycombes; for they yeven swetnesse to the soule, and hoolsomnesse to the body." / And wyf, by-cause of thy swete wordes, and eek for I have assayed and preved thy grete

sapience and thy grete trouthe, I wol governe me by thy conseil in alle thing.' /

§ 17. 'Now sir,' quod dame Prudence, 'and sin ye vouche-sauf to been governed by my conseil, I wol enforme yow how ye shul governe your-self in chesinge of your conseillours. / Ye shul first, in alle your werkes, mekely biseken to the heighe god that he wol be your conseillour; / and shapeth yow to swich entente, that he yeve yow conseil and confort, as taughte Thobie his sone. / "At alle tymes thou shalt blesse god, and preye him to dresse thy weyes"; and looke that alle thy conseils been in him for evermore. / Seint Iame eek seith: "if any of yow have nede of sapience, axe it of god." / And afterward thanne shul ye taken conseil in your-self, and examine wel your thoghtes, of swich thing as yow thinketh that is best for your profit. / And thanne shul ye dryve fro your herte three thinges that been contrariouse to good conseil, / that is to seyn, ire, coveitise, and hastifnesse. /

§ 18. First, he that axeth conseil of him-self, certes he moste been with-outen ire, for manye causes. / The firste is this: he that hath greet ire and wratthe in him-self, he weneth alwey that he may do thing that he may nat do. / And secoundely, he that is irous and wroth, he ne may nat wel deme; / and he that may nat wel deme, may nat wel conseille. / The thridde is this; that "he that is irous and wrooth," as seith Senek, "ne may nat speke but he blame thinges; "/ and with his viciouse wordes he stireth other folk to angre and to ire. / And eek sir, ye moste dryve coveitise out of your herte. / For the apostle seith, that "coveitise is rote of alle harmes." / And trust wel that a coveitous man ne can noght deme ne thinke, but only to fulfille the ende of his coveitise; / and certes, that ne may never be accompliced; for ever the more habundaunce that he hath of richesse, the more he desyreth. / And sir, ye moste also dryve out of your herte hastifnesse; for certes, / ye ne may nat deme for the beste a sodeyn thought that falleth in youre herte, but ye moste avyse yow on it ful ofte. / For as ye herde biforn, the commune proverbe is this, that "he that sone demeth, sone repenteth." /

§ 19. Sir, ye ne be nat alwey in lyke disposicioun; / for certes, som thing that somtyme semeth to yow that it is good for to do, another tyme it semeth to yow the contrarie. /

§ 20. Whan ye han taken conseil in your-self, and han demed by good deliberacion swich thing as you semeth best, / thanne rede I yow, that ye kepe it secree. / Biwrey nat your conseil to no persone, but-if so be that ye wenen sikerly that, thurgh your biwreying, your condicioun shal be to yow the more profitable. / For Iesus Syrak seith: "neither to thy foo ne to thy freend discovere nat thy secree ne thy folie; / for they wol yeve yow audience and loking and supportacioun in thy presence, and scorne thee in thyn absence." / Another clerk seith, that "scarsly shaltou finden any persone that may kepe conseil secreely." / The book seith: "whyl that thou kepest thy conseil in thyn herte, thou kepest it in thy prisoun: / and whan thou biwreyest thy conseil to any wight, he holdeth thee in his snare." / And therefore yow is bettre to hyde your conseil in your herte, than praye him, to whom ye han biwreyed your conseil, that he wole kepen it cloos and stille. / For Seneca seith: "if so be that thou ne mayst nat thyn owene conseil hyde, how darstou prayen any other wight thy conseil secreely to kepe?" /. But nathelees, if thou

wene sikerly that the biwreying of thy conseil to a persone wol make thy condicioun to stonden in the bettre plyt, thanne shaltou tellen him thy conseil in this wyse. / First, thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were lever pees or werre, or this or that, ne shewe him nat thy wille and thyn entente; / for trust wel, that comunly thise conseillours been flatereres, / namely the conseillours of grete lordes; / for they enforcen hem alwey rather to speken plesante wordes, enclyninge to the lordes lust, than wordes that been trewe or profitable. / And therfore men seyn, that "the riche man hath seld good conseil but-if he have it of him-self." / And after that, thou shalt considere thy freendes and thyne enemys. / And as touchinge thy freendes, thou shalt considere whiche of hem been most feithful and most wyse, and eldest and most approved in conseilling. / And of hem shalt thou aske thy conseil, as the caas requireth. /

§ 21. I seye that first ye shul clepe to your conseil your freendes that been trewe. / For Salomon seith: that "right as the herte of a man delyteth in savour that is sote, right so the conseil of trewe freendes yeveth swetenesse to the soule." / He seith also: "ther may no-thing be lykned to the trewe freend." / For certes, gold ne silver beth nat so muche worth as the gode wil of a trewe freend. / And eek he seith, that "a trewe freend is a strong deffense; who-so that it findeth, certes he findeth a greet tresour." / Thanne shul ye eek considere, if that your trewe freendes been discrete and wyse. For the book seith: "axe alwey thy conseil of hem that been wyse." / And by this same resoun shul ye clepen to your conseil, of your freendes that been of age, swiche as han seyn and been expert in manye thinges, and been approved in conseillinges. / For the book seith, that "in olde men is the sapience and in longe tyme the prudence." / And Tullius seith: that "grete thinges ne been nat ay accompliced by strengthe, ne by delivernesse of body, but by good conseil, by auctoritee of persones, and by science; the whiche three thinges ne been nat feble by age, but certes they enforcen and encreesen day by day." / And thanne shul ye kepe this for a general reule. First shul ye clepen to your conseil a fewe of your freendes that been especiale; / for Salomon seith: "manye freendes have thou; but among a thousand chese thee oon to be thy conseillour." / For al-be-it so that thou first ne telle thy conseil but to a fewe, thou mayst afterward telle it to mo folk, if it be nede. / But loke alwey that thy conseillours have thilke three condiciouns that I have seyd bifore; that is to seyn, that they be trewe, wyse, and of old experience. / And werke nat alwey in every nede by oon conseillour allone; for somtyme bihoveth it to been conseilled by manye. / For Salomon seith: "salvacioun of thinges is wher-as ther been manye conseillours." /

§ 22. Now sith that I have told yow of which folk ye sholde been counseilled, now wol I teche yow which conseil ye oghte to eschewe. / First ye shul eschewe the conseilling of foles; for Salomon seith: "taak no conseil of a fool, for he ne can noght conseille but after his owene lust and his affeccioun." / The book seith: that "the propretee of a fool is this; he troweth lightly harm of every wight, and lightly troweth alle bountee in him-self." / Thou shalt eek eschewe the conseilling of alle flatereres, swiche as enforcen hem rather to preise your persone by flaterye than for to telle yow the sothfastnesse of thinges. /

§ 23. Wherfore Tullius seith: "amonges alle the pestilences that been in freendshipe, the gretteste

is flaterye." And therfore is it more nede that thou eschewe and drede flatereres than any other peple. / The book seith: "thou shalt rather drede and flee fro the swete wordes of flateringe preiseres, than fro the egre wordes of thy freend that seith thee thy sothes." / Salomon seith, that "the wordes of a flaterere is a snare to cacche with innocents." / He seith also, that "he that speketh to his freend wordes of swetnesse and of plesaunce, setteth a net biforn his feet to cacche him." / And therfore seith Tullius: "enclyne nat thyne eres to flatereres, ne taketh no conseil of wordes of flaterye." / And Caton seith: "avyse thee wel, and eschewe the wordes of swetnesse and of plesaunce." / And eek thou shalt eschewe the conseilling of thyne olde enemys that been reconsiled. / The book seith: that "no wight retourneth saufly in-to the grace of his olde enemy." / And Isope seith: "ne trust nat to hem to whiche thou hast had somtyme werre or enmitee, ne telle hem nat thy conseil." / And Seneca telleth the cause why. "It may nat be," seith he, "that, where greet fyr hath longe tyme endured, that ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse." / And therfore seith Salomon: "in thyn olde foo trust never." / For sikerly, though thyn enemy be reconsiled and maketh thee chere of humilitee, and louteth to thee with his heed, ne trust him never. / For certes, he maketh thilke feyned humilitee more for his profit than for any love of thy persone; by-cause that he demeth to have victorie over thy persone by swich feyned contenance, the which victorie he mighte nat have by stryf or werre. / And Peter Alfonce seith: "make no felawshipe with thyne olde enemys; for if thou do hem bountee, they wol perverten it in-to wikkednesse." / And eek thou most eschewe the conseilling of hem that been thy servants, and beren thee greet reverence; for peraventure they seyn it more for drede than for love. / And therfore seith a philosophre in this wyse: "ther is no wight parfitly trewe to him that he to sore dredeth." / And Tullius seith: "ther nis no might so greet of any emperour, that longe may endure, but-if he have more love of the peple than drede." / Thou shalt also eschewe the conseiling of folk that been dronkelewe; for they ne can no conseil hyde. / For Salomon seith: "ther is no privetee ther-as regneth dronkenesse." / Ye shul also han in suspect the conseilling of swich folk as conseille yow a thing prively, and conseille yow the contrarie openly. / For Cassidorie seith: that "it is a maner sleighte to hindre, whan he sheweth to doon a thing openly and werketh prively the contrarie." / Thou shalt also have in suspect the conseilling of wikked folk. For the book seith: "the conseilling of wikked folk is alwey ful of fraude:" / And David seith: "blisful is that man that hath nat folwed the conseilling of shrewes." / Thou shalt also eschewe the conseilling of yong folk; for hir conseil is nat rype. /

§ 24. Now sir, sith I have shewed yow of which folk ye shul take your conseil, and of which folk ye shul folwe the conseil, / now wol I teche yow how ye shal examine your conseil, after the doctrine of Tullius. / In the examininge thanne of your conseillour, ye shul considere manye thinges. / Alderfirst thou shalt considere, that in thilke thing that thou purposest, and upon what thing thou wolt have conseil, that verray trouthe be seyd and conserved; this is to seyn, telle trewely thy tale. / For he that seith fals may nat wèl be conseilled, in that cas of which he lyeth. / And after

this, thou shalt considere the thinges that acorden to that thou purposest for to do by thy conseillours, if resoun accorde therto; / and eek, if thy might may atteine ther-to; and if the more part and the bettre part of thy conseillours acorde ther-to, or no. / Thanne shaltou considere what thing shal folwe of that conseilling; as hate, pees, werre, grace, profit, or damage; and manye othere thinges. / And in alle thise thinges thou shalt chese the beste, and weyve alle othere thinges. / Thanne shaltow considere of what rote is engendred the matere of thy conseil, and what fruit it may conceyve and engendre. / Thou shalt eek considere alle thise causes, fro whennes they been sprongen. / And whan ye han examined your conseil as I have seyd, and which partie is the bettre and more profitable, and hast approved it by manye wyse folk and olde; / thanne shaltou considere, if thou mayst parfourne it and maken of it a good ende. / For certes, resoun wol nat that any man sholde biginne a thing, but-if he mighte parfourne it as him oghte. / Ne no wight sholde take up-on hym so hevy a charge that he mighte nat bere it. / For the proverbe seith: "he that to muche embraceth, distreyneth litel." / And Catoun seith: "assay to do swich thing as thou hast power to doon, lest that the charge oppresse thee so sore, that thee bihoveth to weyve thing that thou hast bigonne." / And if so be that thou be in doute, whether thou mayst parfourne a thing or noon, chese rather to suffre than biginne. / And Piers Alphonce seith: "if thou hast might to doon a thing of which thou most repente thee, it is bettre 'nay' than 'ye'; " / this is to seyn, that thee is bettre holde thy tonge stille, than for to speke. / Thanne may ye understonde by strenger resons, that if thou hast power to parfourne a werk of which thou shalt repente, thanne is it bettre that thou suffre than biginne. / Wel seyn they, that defenden every wight to assaye any thing of which he is in doute, whether he may parfourne it or no. / And after, whan ye han examined your conseil as I have seyd biforn, and knowen wel that ye may parfourne youre emprise, conferme it thanne sadly til it be at an ende. /

§ 25. Now is it resoun and tyme that I shewe yow whanne, and wherfore, that ye may chaunge your conseil with-outen your repreve. / Soothly, a man may chaungen his purpos and his conseil if the cause cesseth, or whan a newe caas bitydeth. / For the lawe seith: that "upon thinges that newely bityden bihoveth newe conseil." / And Senek seith: "if thy conseil is comen to the eres of thyn enemy, chaunge thy conseil." / Thou mayst also chaunge thy conseil if so be that thou finde that, by errour or by other cause, harm or damage may bityde. / Also, if thy conseil be dishonest, or elles cometh of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy conseil. / For the lawes seyn: that "alle bihestes that been dishoneste been of no value." / And eek, if it so be that it be inpossible, or may nat goodly be parfourned or kept. /

§ 26. And take this for a general reule, that every conseil that is affermed so strongly that it may nat be chaunged, for no condicioun that may bityde, I seye that thilke conseil is wikked.' /

§ 27. This Melibeus, whanne he hadde herd the doctrine of his wyf dame Prudence, answerde in this wyse. / 'Dame,' quod he, 'as yet in-to this tyme ye han wel and covenably taught me as in general, how I shal governe me in the chesinge and in the withholdinge of my conseillours. / But now wolde I fayn that ye wolde conde-

scende in especial, / and telle me how lyketh yow, or what semeth yow, by our conseillours that we han chosen in our present nede.' /

§ 28. 'My lord,' quod she, 'I biseke yow in al humblesse, that ye wol nat wilfully replye agayn my resouns, ne destempre your herte thogh I speke thing that yow displese. / For god wot that, as in myn entente, I speke it for your beste, for your honour and for your profite eke. / And soothly, I hope that your benignitee wol taken it in pacience. / Trusteth me wel,' quod she, 'that your conseil as in this caas ne sholde nat, as to speke properly, be called a conseilling, but a mocioun or a moevyng of folye; / in which conseil ye han erred in many a sondry wyse. /

§ 29. First and forward, ye han erred in thassemblinge of your conseillours. / For ye sholde first have cleped a fewe folk to your conseil, and after ye mighte han shewed it to mo folk, if it hadde been nede. / But certes, ye han sodeynly cleped to your conseil a greet multitude of peple, ful chargeant and ful anoyous for to here. / Also ye han erred, for there-as ye sholden only have cleped to your conseil your trewe freendes olde and wyse, / ye han y-cleped straunge folk, and yong folk, false flatereres, and enemys reconsiled, and folk that doon yow reverence with-outen love. / And eek also ye have erred, for ye han broght with yow to your conseil ire, covetise, and hastifnesse; / the whiche three thinges been contrariouse to every conseil honeste and profitable; / the whiche three thinges ye han nat anientissed or destroyed hem, neither in your-self ne in your conseillours, as yow oghte. / Ye han erred also, for ye han shewed to your conseillours your talent, and your affeccioun to make werre anon and for to do vengeance; / they han espyed by your wordes to what thing ye been enclyned. / And therfore han they rather conseilled yow to your talent than to your profit. / Ye han erred also, for it semeth that yow suffyseth to han been conseilled by thise conseillours only, and with litel avys; / wher-as, in so greet and so heigh a nede, it hadde been necessarie mo conseillours, and more deliberacioun to parfourne your emprise. / Ye han erred also, for ye han nat examined your conseil in the forseyde manere, ne in due manere as the caas requireth. / Ye han erred also, for ye han maked no divisioun bitwixe your conseillours; this is to seyn, bitwixen your trewe freendes and your feyned conseillours; / ne ye han nat knowe the wil of your trewe freendes olde and wyse; / but ye han cast alle hir wordes in an hochepot, and enclyned your herte to the more part and to the gretter nombre; and ther been ye condescended. / And sith ye wot wel that men shal alwey finde a gretter nombre of foles than of wyse men, / and therfore the conseils that been at congregaciouns and multitudes of folk, ther-as men take more reward to the nombre than to the sapience of persones, / ye see wel that in swiche conseillinges foles han the maistrie,' / Melibeus answerde agayn, and seyde: 'I graunte wel that I have erred; / but ther-as thou hast told me heer-biforn, that he nis nat to blame that chaungeth hise conseillours in certein caas, and for certeine luste causes, / I am al redy to chaunge my conseillours, right as thow wolt devyse. / The proverbe seith: that "for to do sinne is mannish, but certes for to persevere longe in sinne is werk of the devel." /

§ 30. To this sentence answerde anon dame Prudence, and seyde: / 'Examineth,' quod she, 'your conseil, and lat us see the whiche of

hem han spoken most resonably, and taught yow best conseil. / And for-as-muche as that the examinacioun is necessarie, lat us biginne at the surgiens and at the phisiciens, that first speken in this matere. / I sey yow, that the surgiens and phisiciens han seyd yow in your conseil discreetly, as hem oughte; / and in hir speche seyden ful wysly, that to the office of hem aperteneth to doon to every wight honour and profit, and no wight for to anoye; / and, after hir craft, to doon greet diligence un-to the cure of hem whiche that they han in hir governaunce. / And sir, right as they han answered wysly and discreetly, / right so rede I that they been heighly and sovereynly guerdoned for hir noble speche; / and eek for they sholde do the more ententif bisinesse in the curacioun of your doghter dere. / For al-be-it so that they been your freendes, therfore shal ye nat suffren that they serve yow for noght; / but ye oghte the rather guerdone hem and shewe hem your largesse. / And as touchinge the proposicioun which that the phisiciens entreteden in this caas, this is to seyn, / that, in maladyes, that oon contrarie is warisshed by another contrarie, / I wolde fayn knowe how ye understonde thilke text, and what is your sentence.' / 'Certes,' quod Melibeus, 'I understonde it in this wyse: / that, right as they han doon me a contrarie, right so sholde I doon hem another. / For right as they han venged hem on me and doon me wrong, right so shal I venge me upon hem and doon hem wrong; / and thanne have I cured oon contrarie by another.' /

§ 31. 'Lo, lo!' quod dame Prudence, 'how lightly is every man enclyned to his owene desyr and to his owene plesaunce! / Certes,' quod she, 'the wordes of the phisiciens ne sholde nat han been understonden in this wyse. / For certes, wikkednesse is nat contrarie to wikkednesse, ne vengeaunce to vengeaunce, ne wrong to wrong; but they been semblable. / And therfore, o vengeaunce is nat warisshed by another vengeaunce, ne o wrong by another wrong; / but everich of hem encreesceth and aggreggeth other. / But certes, the wordes of the phisiciens sholde been understonden in this wyse: / for good and wikkednesse been two contraries, and pees and werre, vengeaunce and suffraunce, discord and accord, and manye othere thinges. / But certes, wikkednesse shal be warisshed by goodnesse, discord by accord, werre by pees, and so forth of othere thinges. / And heer-to acordeth Seint Paul the apostle in manye places. / He seith: "ne yeldeth nat harm for harm, ne wikked speche for wikked speche; / but do wel to him that dooth thee harm, and blesse him that seith to thee harm." / And in manye othere places he amonesteth pees and accord. / But now wol I speke to yow of the conseil which that was yeven to yow by the men of lawe and the wyse folk, / that seyden alle by oon accord as ye han herd bifore; / that, over alle thynges, ye sholde doon your diligence to kepen your persone and to warnestore your hous. / And seyden also, that in this caas ye oghten for to werken ful avysely and with greet deliberacioun. / And sir, as to the firste point, that toucheth to the keping of your persone; / ye shul understonde that he that hath werre shal evermore mekely and devoutly preyen biforn alle thinges, / that Iesus Crist of his grete mercy wol han him in his protecciouu, and been his sovereyn helping at his nede. / For certes, in this world ther is no wight that may be conseilled ne kept suffisantly withouten the keping of our lord Iesu Crist. / To this sentence accordeth the prophete David, that seith: / "if

god ne kepe the citee, in ydel wak-
eth he that it kepeth." / Now sir,
thanne shul ye committe the keping
of your persone to your trewe
freendes that been approved and
y-knowe; / and of hem shul ye
axen help your persone for to kepe.
For Catoun seith: "if thou hast
nede of help, axe it of thy freendes; /
for ther nis noon so good a phisi-
cien as thy trewe freend." / And
after this, thanne shul ye kepe yow
fro alle straunge folk, and fro lyeres,
and have alwey in suspect hir com-
panye. / For Piers Alfonce seith:
"ne tak no companye by the weye
of a straunge man, but-if so be that
thou have knowe him of a lenger
tyme. / And if so be that he falle
in-to thy companye paraventure
withouten thyn assent, / enquere
thanne, as subtilly as thou mayst, of
his conversacioun and of his lyf bi-
fore, and feyne thy wey; seye that
thou goost thider as thou wolt nat
go; / and if he bereth a spere, hold
thee on the right syde, and if he
bere a swerd, hold thee on the lift
syde." / And after this, thanne
shul ye kepe yow wysely from alle
swich manere peple as I have seyd
bifore, and hem and hir conseil es-
chewe. / And after this, thanne
shul ye kepe yow in swich manere, /
that for any presumpcioun of your
strengthe, that ye ne dispyse nat ne
acounte nat the might of your ad-
versarie so litel, that ye lete the
keping of your persone for your
presumpcioun; / for every wys man
dredeth his enemy. / And Salo-
mon seith: "weleful is he that of
alle hath drede; / for certes, he
that thurgh the hardinesse of his
herte and thurgh the hardinesse of
him-self hath to greet presumpcioun,
him shal yvel bityde." / Thanne
shul ye evermore countrewayte em-
busshements and alle espiaille. /
For Senek seith: that "the wyse
man that dredeth harmes escheweth
harmes; / ne he ne falleth in-to per-
ils, that perils escheweth." / And al-
be-it so that it seme that thou art in
siker place, yet shaltow alwey do thy
diligence in kepinge of thy per-
sone; / this is to seyn, ne be nat nec-
ligent to kepe thy persone, nat only
fro thy gretteste enemys but fro thy
leeste enemy. / Senek seith: "a
man that is wel avysed, he dredeth
his leste enemy." / Ovide seith:
that "the litel wesele wol slee the
grete bole and the wilde hert." /
And the book seith: "a litel thorn
may prikke a greet king ful sore;
and an hound wol holde the wilde
boor." / But nathelees, I sey nat
thou shalt be so coward that thou
doute ther wher-as is no drede. /
The book seith: that "somme folk
han greet lust to deceyve, but yet
they dreden hem to be deceyved." /
Yet shaltou drede to been empois-
oned, and kepe yow from the com-
panye of scorneres. / For the book
seith: "with scorneres make no
companye, but flee hir wordes as
venim." /

§ 32. Now as to the seconde
point, wher-as your wyse conseil-
lours conseilled yow to warnestore
your hous with gret diligence, / I
wolde fayn knowe, how that ye
understonde thilke wordes, and
what is your sentence.' /

§ 33. Melibeus answerde and
seyde, 'Certes I understande it in
this wise; that I shal warnestore
myn hous with toures, swiche as
han castelles and othere manere
edifices, and armure and artel-
leries, / by whiche thinges I may
my persone and myn hous so kepen
and defenden, that myne enemys
shul been in drede myn hous for to
approche.' /

§ 34. To this sentence answerde
anon Prudence; 'warnestoring,'
quod she, 'of heighe toures and
of grete edifices apperteneth som-
tyme to pryde; / and eek men
make heighe toures and grete edi-
fices with grete costages and with
greet travaille; and whan that they
been accompliced, yet be they nat

worth a stree, but-if they be defended by trewe freendes that been olde and wyse. / And understond wel, that the gretteste and strongeste garnison that a riche man may have, as wel to kepen his persone as hise goodes, is / that he be biloved amonges his subgets and with hise neighebores. / For thus seith Tullius: that "ther is a maner garnison that no man may venquisse ne disconfite, and that is, / a lord to be biloved of hise citezeins and of his peple." /

§ 35. Now sir, as to the thridde point; wher-as your olde and wise conseillours seyden, that yow ne oghte nat sodeynly ne hastily proceden in this nede, / but that yow oghte purveyen and apparaillen yow in this caas with greet diligence and greet deliberacioun; / trewely, I trowe that they seyden right wysly and right sooth. / For Tullius seith, "in every nede, er thou biginne it, apparaille thee with greet diligence." / Thanne seye I, that in vengeance-taking, in werre, in bataille, and in warnestoring, / er thow biginne, I rede that thou apparaille thee ther-to, and do it with greet deliberacioun. / For Tullius seith: that "long apparailling biforn the bataille maketh short victorie." / And Cassidorus seith: "the garnison is stronger whan it is longe tyme avysed." /

§ 36. But now lat us speken of the conseil that was accorded by your neighebores, swiche as doon yow reverence withouten love, / your olde enemys reconsiled, your flatereres / that conseilled yow certeyne thinges prively, and openly conseilleden yow the contrarie; / the yonge folk also, that conseilleden yow to venge yow and make werre anon. / And certes, sir, as I have seyd biforn, ye han greetly erred to han cleped swich maner folk to your conseil; / which conseillours been y-nogh repreved by the resouns afore-seyd. But nathelees, lat us now descende to the special. Ye shuln first procede after the doctrine of Tullius. / Certes, the trouthe of this matere or of this conseil nedeth nat diligently enquere; / for it is wel wist whiche they been that han doon to yow this trespas and vileinye, / and how manye trespassours, and in what manere they han to yow doon al this wrong and al this vileinye. / And after this, thanne shul ye examine the seconde condicioun, which that the same Tullius addeth in this matere. / For Tullius put a thing, which that he clepeth "consentinge," this is to seyn; / who been they and how manye, and whiche been they, that consenteden to thy conseil, in thy wilfulnesse to doon hastif vengeance. / And lat us considere also who been they, and how manye been they, and whiche been they, that consenteden to your adversaries. / And certes, as to the firste poynt, it is wel knowen whiche folk been they that consenteden to your hastif wilfulnesse; / for trewely, alle tho that conseilleden yow to maken sodeyn werre ne been nat your freendes. / Lat us now considere whiche been they, that ye holde so greetly your freendes as to your persone. / For al-be-it so that ye be mighty and riche, certes ye ne been nat but allone. / For certes, ye ne han no child but a doghter; / ne ye ne han bretheren ne cosins germayns, ne noon other neigh kinrede, / wherfore that your enemys, for drede, sholde stinte to plede with yow or to destroye your persone. / Ye knowen also, that your richesses moten been dispended in diverse parties; / and whan that every wight hath his part, they ne wollen taken but litel reward to venge thy deeth. / But thyne enemys been three, and they han manie children, bretheren, cosins, and other ny kinrede; / and, though so were

that thou haddest slayn of hem two or three, yet dwellen ther y-nowe to wreken hir deeth and to slee thy persone. / And though so be that your kinrede be more siker and stedefast than the kin of your adversarie, / yet nathelees your kinrede nis but a fer kinrede; they been but litel sib to yow, / and the kin of your enemys been ny sib to hem. And certes, as in that, hir condicioun is bet than youres. / Thanne lat us considere also if the conseilling of hem that conseilleden yow to taken sodeyn vengeaunce, whether it accorde to resoun? / And certes, ye knowe wel "nay." / For as by right and resoun, ther may no man taken vengeance on no wight, but the Iuge that hath the Iurisdiccioun of it, / whan it is graunted him to take thilke vengeance, hastily or attemprely, as the lawe requireth. / And yet more-over, of thilke word that Tullius clepeth "consentinge," / thou shalt considere if thy might and thy power may consenten and suffyse to thy wilfulnesse and to thy conseillours. / And certes, thou mayst wel seyn that "nay." / For sikerly, as for to speke proprely, we may do no-thing but only swich thing as we may doon rightfully. / And certes, rightfully ne mowe ye take no vengeance as of your propre auctoritee. / Thanne mowe ye seen, that your power ne consenteth nat ne accordeth nat with your wilfulnesse. / Lat us now examine the thridde point that Tullius clepeth "consequent." / Thou shalt understonde that the vengeance that thou purposest for to take is the consequent. / And ther-of folweth another vengeaunce, peril, and werre; and othere damages with-oute nombre, of whiche we be nat war as at this tyme. / And as touchinge the fourthe point, that Tullius clepeth "engendringe," / thou shalt considere, that this wrong which that is doon to thee is engendred of the hate of thyne enemys; / and of the vengeance-takinge upon that wolde engendre another vengeance, and muchel sorwe and wastinge of richesses, as I seyde. /

§ 37. Now sir, as to the point that Tullius clepeth "causes," which that is the laste point, / thou shalt understonde that the wrong that thou hast receyved hath certeine causes, / whiche that clerkes clepen *Oriens* and *Efficiens*, and *Causa longinqua* and *Causa propinqua*; this is to seyn, the fer cause and the ny cause. / The fer cause is almighty god, that is cause of alle thinges. / The neer cause is thy three enemys. / The cause accidental was hate. / The cause material been the fyve woundes of thy doghter. / The cause formal is the manere of hir werkinge, that broghten laddres and cloumben in at thy windowes. / The cause final was for to slee thy doghter; it letted nat in as muche as in hem was. / But for to speken of the fer cause, as to what ende they shul come, or what shal finally bityde of hem in this caas, ne can I nat deme but by coniectinge and by supposinge. / For we shul suppose that they shul come to a wikked ende, / by-cause that the Book of Decrees seith: "selden or with greet peyne been causes y-brought to good ende whanne they been baddely bigonne." /

§ 38. Now sir, if men wolde axe me, why that god suffred men to do yow this vileinye, certes, I can nat wel answere as for no sothfastnesse. / For thapostle seith, that "the sciences and the Iuggementz of our lord god almighty been ful depe; / ther may no man comprehende ne serchen hem suffisantly." / Nathelees, by certeyne presumpcions and coniectinges, I holde and bileve / that god, which that is ful of Iustice and of rightwisnesse, hath suffred

this bityde by Iuste cause resonable. /

§ 39. Thy name is Melibee, this is to seyn, "a man that drinketh hony." / Thou hast y-dronke so muchel hony of swete temporel richesses and delices and honours of this world, / that thou art dronken; and hast forgeten Iesu Crist thy creatour; / thou ne hast nat doon to him swich honour and reverence as thee oughte. / Ne thou ne hast nat wel y-taken kepe to the wordes of Ovide, that seith: / "under the hony of the godes of the body is hid the venim that sleeth the soule." / And Salomon seith, "if thou hast founden hony, ete of it that suffyseth; / for if thou ete of it out of mesure, thou shalt spewe," and be nedy and povre. / And peraventure Crist hath thee in despit, and hath turned awey fro thee his face and hise eres of misericorde; / and also he hath suffred that thou hast been punisshed in the manere that thow hast y-trespassed. / Thou hast doon sinne agayn our lord Crist; / for certes, the three enemys of mankinde, that is to seyn, the flessh, the feend, and the world, / thou hast suffred hem entre in-to thyn herte wilfully by the windowes of thy body, / and hast nat defended thy-self suffisantly agayns hir assautes and hir temptaciouns, so that they han wounded thy soule in fyve places; / this is to seyn, the deedly sinnes that been entred in-to thyn herte by thy fyve wittes. / And in the same manere our lord Crist hath wold and suffred, that thy three enemys been entred in-to thyn hous by the windowes, / and han y-wounded thy doghter in the fore-seyde manere.' /

§ 40. 'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I see wel that ye enforce yow muchel by wordes to overcome me in swich manere, that I shal nat venge me of myne enemys; / shewinge me the perils and the yvels that mighten falle of this vengeance. / But who-so wolde considere in alle vengeances the perils and yveles that mighte sewe of vengeance-takinge, / a man wolde never take vengeance, and that were harm; / for by the vengeance-takinge been the wikked men dissevered fro the gode men. / And they that han wil to do wikkednesse restreyne hir wikked purpos, whan they seen the punissinge and chastysinge of the trespassours.' / [And to this answerde dame Prudence: 'Certes,' seyde she, 'I graunte wel that of vengeaunce cometh muchel yvel and muchel good; / but vengeaunce-taking aperteneth nat unto everichoon, but only unto Iuges and unto hem that han Iurisdiccioun upon the trespassours.] / And yet seye I more, that right as a singuler persone sinneth in takinge vengeance of another man, / right so sinneth the Iuge if he do no vengeance of hem that it han deserved. / For Senek seith thus: "that maister," he seith, "is good that proveth shrewes." / And as Cassidore seith: "A man dredeth to do outrages, whan he woot and knoweth that it displeseth to the Iuges and sovereyns." / And another seith: "the Iuge that dredeth to do right, maketh men shrewes." / And Seint Paule the apostle seith in his epistle, whan he wryteth un-to the Romayns: that "the Iuges beren nat the spere with-outen cause;" / but they beren it to punisse the shrewes and misdoeres, and for to defende the gode men. / If ye wol thanne take vengeance of your enemys, ye shul retourne or have your recours to the Iuge that hath the Iurisdiccion up-on hem; / and he shal punisse hem as the lawe axeth and requyreth.' /

§ 41. 'A!' quod Melibee, 'this vengeance lyketh me no-thing. / I bithenke me now and take hede, how fortune hath norissed me fro my childhede, and hath holpen me

to passe many a strong pas. / Now wol I assayen hir, trowinge, with goddes help, that she shal helpe me my shame for to venge.' /

§ 42. 'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'if ye wol werke by my conseil, ye shul nat assaye fortune by no wey; / ne ye shul nat lene or bowe unto hir, after the word of Senek: / for "thinges that been folily doon, and that been in hope of fortune, shullen never come to good ende." / And as the same Senek seith: "the more cleer and the more shyning that fortune is, the more brotil and the sonner broken she is." / Trusteth nat in hir, for she nis nat stidefast ne stable; / for whan thow trowest to be most seur or siker of hir help, she wol faille thee and deceyve thee. / And wher-as ye seyn that fortune hath norissed yow fro your childhede, / I seye, that in so muchel shul ye the lasse truste in hir and in hir wit. / For Senek seith: "what man that is norissed by fortune, she maketh him a greet fool." / Now thanne, sin ye desyre and axe vengeance, and the vengeance that is doon after the lawe and bifore the Iuge ne lyketh yow nat, / and the vengeance that is doon in hope of fortune is perilous and uncertein, / thanne have ye noon other remedie but for to have your recours unto the sovereyn Iuge that vengeth alle vileinyes and wronges; / and he shal venge yow after that him-self witnesseth, wher-as he seith: / "leveth the vengeance to me, and I shal do it." '

§ 43. Melibee answerde, 'if I ne venge me nat of the vileinye that men han doon to me, / I sompne or warne hem that han doon to me that vileinye and alle othere, to do me another vileinye. / For it is writen: "if thou take no vengeance of an old vileinye, thou sompnest thyne adversaries to do thee a newe vileinye." / And also, for my suffrance, men wolden do to me so muchel vileinye, that I mighte neither bere it ne sustene; / and so sholde I been put and holden over lowe. / For men seyn: "in muchel suffringe shul manye thinges falle un-to thee whiche thou shalt nat mowe suffre." '

§ 44. 'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'I graunte yow that over muchel suffraunce nis nat good; / but yet ne folweth it nat ther-of, that every persone to whom men doon vileinye take of it vengeance; / for that aperteneth and longeth al only to the Iuges, for they shul venge the vileinyes and iniuries. / And therfore tho two auctoritees that ye han seyd above, been only understonden in the Iuges; / for whan they suffren over muchel the wronges and the vileinyes to be doon withouten punisshinge, / they sompne nat a man al only for to do newe wronges, but they comanden it. / Also a wys man seith: that "the Iuge that correcteth nat the sinnere comandeth and biddeth him do sinne." / And the Iuges and sovereyns mighten in hir land so muchel suffre of the shrewes and misdoeres, / that they sholden by swich suffrance, by proces of tyme, wexen of swich power and might, that they sholden putte out the Iuges and the sovereyns from hir places, / and atte laste maken hem lesen hir lordshipes. /

§ 45. But lat us now putte, that ye have leve to venge yow. / I seye ye been nat of might and power as now to venge yow. / For if ye wole maken comparisoun unto the might of your adversaries, ye shul finde in manye thinges, that I have shewed yow er this, that hir condicioun is bettre than youres. / And therfore seye I, that it is good as now that ye suffre and be pacient. /

§ 46. Forther-more, ye knowen wel that, after the comune sawe, "it is a woodnesse a man to stryve with a strenger or a more mighty man than he is him-self; / and for

to stryve with a man of evene strengthe, that is to seyn, with as strong a man as he, it is peril; / and for to stryve with a weyker man, it is folie." / And therfore sholde a man flee stryvinge as muchel as he mighte. / For Salomon seith: "it is a greet worship to a man to kepen him fro noyse and stryf." / And if it so bifalle or happe that a man of gretter might and strengthe than thou art do thee grevaunce, / studie and bisie thee rather to stille the same grevaunce, than for to venge thee. / For Senek seith: that "he putteth him in greet peril that stryveth with a gretter man than he is him-self." / And Catoun seith: "if a man of hyer estaat or degree, or more mighty than thou, do thee anoy or grevaunce, suffre him; / for he that ones hath greved thee may another tyme releve thee and helpe." / Yet sette I caas, ye have bothe might and licence for to venge yow. / I seye, that ther be ful manye thinges that shul restreyne yow of vengeance-takinge, / and make yow for to enclyne to suffre, and for to han pacience in the thinges that han been doon to yow. / First and foreward, if ye wole considere the defautes that been in your owene person, / for whiche defautes god hath suffred yow have this tribulacioun, as I have seyd yow heer-biforn. / For the poete seith, that "we oghte paciently taken the tribulacions that comen to us, whan we thinken and consideren that we han deserved to have hem." / And Seint Gregorie seith: that "whan a man considereth wel the nombre of hise defautes and of his sinnes, / the peynes and the tribulacioun that he suffreth semen the lesse un-to hym; / and in-as-muche as him thinketh hise sinnes more hevy and grevous, / in-so-muche semeth his peyne the lighter and the esier un-to him." / Also ye owen to enclyne and bowe your herte to take the pacience of our lord Iesu Crist, as seith seint Peter in hise epistles: / "Iesu Crist," he seith, "hath suffred for us, and yeven ensample to every man to folwe and sewe him; / for he dide never sinne, ne never cam ther a vileinous word out of his mouth: / whan men cursed him, he cursed hem noght; and whan men betten him, he manaced hem noght." / Also the grete pacience, which the seintes that been in paradys han had in tribulacioun that they han y-suffred, with-outen hir desert or gilt, / oghte muchel stiren yow to pacience. / Forthermore, ye sholde enforce yow to have pacience, / consideringe that the tribulacioun of this world but litel whyle endure, and sone passed been and goon. / And the Ioye that a man seketh to have by pacience in tribulacioun is perdurable, after that the apostle seith in his epistle: / "the Ioye of god," he seith, "is perdurable," that is to seyn, everlastinge. / Also troweth and bileveth stedefastly, that he nis nat wel y-norissed ne wel y-taught, that can nat have pacience or wol nat receyve pacience. / For Salomon seith: that "the doctrine and the wit of a man is knowen by pacience." / And in another place he seith: that "he that is pacient governeth him by greet prudence." / And the same Salomon seith: "the angry and wrathful man maketh noyses, and the pacient man atempreth hem and stilleth." / He seith also: "it is more worth to be pacient than for to be right strong; / and he that may have the lordshipe of his owene herte is more to preyse, than he that by his force or strengthe taketh grete citees." / And therfore seith seint Iame in his epistle: that "pacience is a greet vertu of perfeccioun." / '

§ 47. 'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I graunte yow, dame Prudence, that pacience is a greet vertu of perfec-

ciouun; / but every man may nat have the perfeccioun that ye seken; / ne I nam nat of the nombre of right parfite men, / for myn herte may never been in pees un-to the tyme it be venged. / And al-be-it so that it was greet peril to myne enemys, to do me a vileinye in takinge vengeance up-on me, / yet token they noon hede of the peril, but fulfilleden hir wikked wil and hir corage. / And therfore, me thinketh men oghten nat repreve me, though I putte me in a litel peril for to venge me, / and though I do a greet excesse, that is to seyn, that I venge oon outrage by another.' /

§ 48. 'A!' quod dame Prudence, 'ye seyn your wil and as yow lyketh; / but in no caas of the world a man sholde nat doon outrage ne excesse for to vengen him. / For Cassidore seith: that "as yvel doth he that vengeth him by outrage, as he that doth the outrage." / And therfore ye shul venge yow after the ordre of right, that is to seyn by the lawe, and noght by excesse ne by outrage. / And also, if ye wol venge yow of the outrage of your adversaries in other maner than right comandeth, ye sinnen; / and therfore seith Senek: that "a man shal never vengen shrewednesse by shrewednesse." / And if ye seye, that right axeth a man to defenden violence by violence, and fighting by fighting, / certes ye seye sooth, whan the defense is doon anon withouten intervalle or with-outen tarying or delay, / for to defenden him and nat for to vengen him. / And it bihoveth that a man putte swich attemperance in his defence, / that men have no cause ne matere to repreven him that defendeth him of excesse and outrage; for elles were it agayn resoun. / Pardee, ye knowen wel, that ye maken no defence as now for to defende yow, but for to venge yow; / and so seweth it that ye han no wil to do your dede attemprely. / And therfore, me thinketh that pacience is good. For Salomon seith: that "he that is nat pacient shal have greet harm." /

§ 49. 'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I graunte yow, that whan a man is impacient and wroth, of that that toucheth him noght and that aperteneth nat un-to him, though it harme him, it is no wonder. / For the lawe seith: that "he is coupable that entremetteth or medleth with swich thyng as aperteneth nat un-to him." / And Salomon seith: that "he that entremetteth him of the noyse or stryf of another man, is lyk to him that taketh an hound by the eres." / For right as he that taketh a straunge hound by the eres is outherwhyle biten with the hound, / right in the same wyse is it resoun that he have harm, that by his inpacience medleth him of the noyse of another man, wher-as it aperteneth nat un-to him. / But ye knowen wel that this dede, that is to seyn, my grief and my disese, toucheth me right ny. / And therfore, though I be wroth and inpacient, it is no merveille. / And savinge your grace, I can nat seen that it mighte greetly harme me though I toke vengeaunce; / for I am richer and more mighty than myne enemys been. / And wel knowen ye, that by moneye and by havinge grete possessions been all the thinges of this world governed. / And Salomon seith: that "alle thinges obeyen to moneye." /

§ 50. Whan Prudence hadde herde hir housbonde avanten him of his richesse and of his moneye, dispreisinge the power of hise adversaries, she spak, and seyde in this wyse: / 'certes, dere sir, I graunte yow that ye been rich and mighty, / and that the richesses been goode to hem that han wel y-geten hem and wel conne usen hem. / For right as the body of a man may nat liven with-oute the soule, namore may it live with-outen temporel goodes. /

And by richesses may a man gete
him grete freendes. / And ther-
fore seith Pamphilles: "if a net-
herdes doghter," seith he, "be riche,
she may chesen of a thousand men
which she wol take to hir hous-
bonde; / for, of a thousand men, oon
wol nat forsaken hir ne refusen hir." /
And this Pamphilles seith also: "if
thou be right happy, that is to seyn,
if thou be right riche, thou shalt find
a greet nombre of felawes and
freendes. / And if thy fortune
change that thou wexe povre, fare-
wel freendshipe and felaweshipe; /
for thou shalt be allone with-outen
any companye, but-if it be the com-
panye of povre folk." / And yet
seith this Pamphilles moreover:
that "they that been thralle and
bonde of linage shullen been maad
worthy and noble by the rich-
esses." / And right so as by rich-
esses ther comen manye goodes,
right so by poverte come ther manye
harmes and yveles. / For greet
poverte constreyneth a man to do
manye yveles. / And therfore clep-
eth Cassidore poverte "the moder
of ruine," / that is to seyn, the
moder of overthrowinge or fallinge
doun. / And therfore seith Piers
Alfonce: "oon of the gretteste ad-
versitees of this world is / whan a
free man, by kinde or by burthe, is
constreyned by poverte to eten the
almesse of his enemy." / And the
same seith Innocent in oon of hise
bokes; he seith: that "sorweful
and mishappy is the condicioun of
a povre begger; / for if he axe nat
his mete, he dyeth for hunger; /
and if he axe, he dyeth for shame;
and algates necessitee constreyneth
him to axe." / And therfore seith
Salomon: that "bet it is to dye
than for to have swich poverte." /
And as the same Salomon seith:
"bettre it is to dye of bitter deeth
than for to liven in swich wyse." /
By thise resons that I have seid un-
to yow, and by manye othere re-
sons that I coude seye, / I graunte
yow that richesses been goode to hem
that geten hem wel, and to hem that
wel usen tho richesses. / And
therfore wol I shewe yow how ye
shul have yow, and how ye shul bere
yow in gaderinge of richesses, and
in what manere ye shul usen hem. /

§ 51. First, ye shul geten hem
with-outen greet desyr, by good
leyser sokingly, and nat over has-
tily. / For a man that is to desyr-
inge to gete richesses abaundoneth
him first to thefte and to alle other
yveles. / And therfore seith Salo-
mon: "he that hasteth him to bisily
to wexe riche shal be noon inno-
cent." / He seith also: that "the
richesse that hastily cometh to a
man, sone and lightly gooth and
passeth fro a man; / but that rich-
esse that cometh litel and litel wex-
eth alwey and multiplyeth." / And
sir, ye shul geten richesses by your
wit and by your travaille un-to your
profit; / and that with-outen wrong
or harm-doinge to any other per-
sone. / For the lawe seith: that
"ther maketh no man himselven
riche, if he do harm to another
wight;" / this is to seyn, that
nature defendeth and forbedeth by
right, that no man make him-self
riche un-to the harm of another per-
sone. / And Tullius seith: that
"no sorwe ne no drede of deeth,
ne no-thing that may falle un-to a
man / is so muchel agayns nature,
as a man to encressen his owene
profit to the harm of another man. /
And though the grete men and the
mighty men geten richesses more
lightly than thou, / yet shaltou nat
been ydel ne slow to do thy profit;
for thou shalt in alle wyse flee ydel-
nesse." / For Salomon seith: that
"ydelnesse techeth a man to do
manye yveles." / And the same
Salomon seith: that "he that tra-
vailleth and bisieth him to tilien his
land, shal eten breed; / but he that
is ydel and casteth him to no bisi-
nesse ne occupacioun, shal falle
in-to poverte, and dye for hun-

ger." / And he that is ydel and slow can never finde covenable tyme for to doon his profit. / For ther is a versifiour seith: that "the ydel man excuseth hym in winter, by cause of the grete cold; and in somer, by enchesoun of the hete." / For thise causes seith Caton: "wak-eth and enclyneth nat yow over muchel for to slepe; for over muchel reste norisseth and causeth manye vices." / And therfore seith seint Ierome: "doth somme gode dedes, that the devel which is our enemy ne finde yow nat unoccu-
2785 pied." / For the devel ne taketh nat lightly un-to his werkinge swiche as he findeth occupied in gode werkes." /

§ 52. Thanne thus, in getinge richesses, ye mosten flee ydel-nesse. / And afterward, ye shul use the richesses, whiche ye have geten by your wit and by your travaille, / in swich a manere, that men holde nat yow to scars, ne to sparinge, ne to fool-large, that is to seyn, over-large a spender. / For right as men blamen an avaricious man by-cause of his scarsetee and
2790 chincherye, / in the same wyse is he to blame that spendeth over largely. / And ther-fore seith Caton: "use," he seith, "thy richesses that thou hast geten / in swich a manere, that men have no matere ne cause to calle thee neither wrecche ne chinche; / for it is a greet shame to a man to have a povere herte and a riche purs." / He seith also: "the goodes that thou hast y-geten, use hem by mesure," that is to seyn, spende
2795 hem mesurably; / for they that folily wasten and despenden the goodes that they han, / whan they han namore propre of hir owene, they shapen hem to take the goodes of another man. / I seye thanne, that ye shul fleen avarice; / usinge your richesses in swich manere, that men seye nat that your richesses been y-buried, / but that ye have hem in your might and in your weeldinge. / For a wys man re-
2800 preveth the avaricious man, and seith thus, in two vers: / "wherto and why burieth a man hise goodes by his grete avarice, and knoweth wel that nedes moste he dye; / for deeth is the ende of every man as in this present lyf." / And for what cause or enchesoun Ioyneth he him or knitteth he him so faste un-to hise goodes, / that alle his wittes mowen nat disseveren him or de-parten him from hise goodes; / and
2805 knoweth wel, or oghte knowe, that whan he is deed, he shal no-thing bere with him out of this world. / And ther-fore seith seint Augustin: that "the avaricious man is likned un-to helle; / that the more it swelweth, the more desyr it hath to swelwe and devoure." / And as wel as ye wolde eschewe to be called an avaricious man or chinche, / as wel sholde ye kepe yow and governe yow in swich a wyse that men calle yow nat fool-large. / Therfore seith Tul-
2810 lius: "the goodes," he seith, "of thyn hous ne sholde nat been hid, ne kept so cloos but that they mighte been opened by pitee and debonairetee; " / that is to seyn, to yeven part to hem that han greet nede; / "ne thy goodes shullen nat been so opene, to been every mannes goodes." / Afterward, in getinge of your richesses and in usinge hem, ye shul alwey have three thinges in your herte; / that is to seyn, our lord god, conscience, and good name. / First, ye shul
2815 have god in your herte; / and for no richesse ye shullen do no-thing, which may in any manere displese god, that is your creatour and maker. / For after the word of Salomon: "it is bettre to have a litel good with the love of god, / than to have muchel good and tresour, and lese the love of his lord god." / And the prophete seith: that "bettre it is to been a good

man and have litel good and tre-
sour, / than to been holden a
shrewe and have grete richesse." /
And yet seye I ferthermore, that ye
sholde alwey doon your bisinesse to
gete yow richesses, / so that ye gete
hem with good conscience. / And
thapostle seith: that "ther nis
thing in this world, of which we
sholden have so greet Ioye as whan
our conscience bereth us good
witnesse." / And the wyse man
seith: "the substance of a man is
ful good, whan sinne is nat in
mannes conscience." / Afterward,
in getinge of your richesses, and in
usinge of hem, / yow moste have
greet bisinesse and greet dili-
gence, that your goode name be
alwey kept and conserved. / For
Salomon seith: that "bettre it is
and more it availeth a man to have
a good name, than for to have grete
richesses." / And therfore he
seith in another place: "do greet
diligence," seith Salomon, "in kep-
ing of thy freend and of thy gode
name; / for it shal lenger abide
with thee than any tresour, be it
never so precious." / And certes
he sholde nat be called a gentil
man, that after god and good con-
science, alle thinges left, ne dooth
his diligence and bisinesse to kepen
his good name. / And Cassidore
seith: that "it is signe of a gentil
herte, whan a man loveth and
desyreth to han a good name." /
And therfore seith seint Augustin:
that "ther been two thinges that
arn necessarie and nedefulle, / and
that is good conscience and good
loos; / that is to seyn, good con-
science to thyn owene persone in-
ward, and good loos for thy
neighebore outward." / And he
that trusteth him so muchel in his
gode conscience, / that he dis-
pleseth and setteth at noght his
gode name or loos, and rekketh
noght though he kepe nat his gode
name, nis but a cruel cherl. /

§ 53. Sire, now have I shewed
yow how ye shul do in getinge
richesses, and how ye shullen usen
hem; / and I se wel, that for the
trust that ye han in youre richesses,
ye wole moeve werre and bataille. /
I conseille yow, that ye biginne no
werre in trust of your richesses;
for they ne suffysen noght werres to
mayntene. / And therfore seith a
philosophre: "that man that desy-
reth and wole algates han werre,
shal never have suffisaunce; / for
the richer that he is, the gretter
despenses moste he make, if he
wole have worship and victorie." /
And Salomon seith: that "the
gretter richesses that a man hath,
the mo despendours he hath." /
And dere sire, al-be-it so that for
your richesses ye mowe have muchel
folk, / yet bihoveth it nat, ne it is
nat good, to biginne werre, where-
as ye mowe in other manere have
pees, un-to your worship and
profit. / For the victories of bat-
ailles that been in this world, lyen
nat in greet nombre or multitude of
the peple ne in the vertu of man; /
but it lyth in the wil and in the
hand of our lord god almighty. /
And therfore Iudas Machabeus,
which was goddes knight, / whan
he sholde fighte agayn his adver-
sarie that hadde a greet nombre,
and a gretter multitude of folk and
strenger than was this peple of
Machabee, / yet he reconforted his
litel companye, and seyde right in
this wyse: / "als lightly," quod he,
"may our lord god almighty yeve
victorie to a fewe folk as to many
folk; / for the victorie of bataile
cometh nat by the grete nombre of
peple, / but it cometh from our lord
god of hevene." / And dere sir,
for as muchel as there is no man
certein, if he be worthy that god
yeve him victorie, [namore than he
is certein whether he be worthy of
the love of god] or naught, after
that Salomon seith, / therfore every
man sholde greetly drede werres to
biginne. / And by-cause that in

batailles fallen manye perils, / and happeth outher-while, that as sone is the grete man sleyn as the litel man; / and, as it is written in the seconde book of Kinges, "the dedes of batailles been aventurouse and nothing certeyne; / for as lightly is oon hurt with a spere as another." / And for ther is gret peril in werre, therfore sholde a man flee and eschewe werre, in as muchel as a man may goodly. / For Salomon seith: "he that loveth peril shal falle in peril." ' /

§ 54. After that Dame Prudence hadde spoken in this manere, Melibee answerde and seyde, / 'I see wel, dame Prudence, that by your faire wordes and by your resons that ye han shewed me, that the werre lyketh yow no-thing; / but I have nat yet herd your conseil, how I shal do in this nede.' /

§ 55. 'Certes,' quod she, 'I conseille yow that ye accorde with youre adversaries, and that ye haue pees with hem. / For seint Iame seith in hise epistles: that "by concord and pees the smale richesses wexen grete, / and by debaat and discord the grete richesses fallen doun." / And ye knowen wel that oon of the gretteste and most sovereyn thing, that is in this world, is unitee and pees. / And therfore seyde oure lord Iesu Crist to hise apostles in this wyse: / "wel happy and blessed been they that loven and purchacen pees; for they been called children of god." ' / 'A!' quod Melibee, 'now se I wel that ye loven nat myn honour ne my worshipe. / Ye knowen wel that myne adversaries han bigonnen this debaat and brigè by hir outrage; / and ye see wel that they ne requeren ne preyen me nat of pees, ne they asken nat to be reconsiled. / Wol ye thanne that I go and meke me and obeye me to hem, and crye hem mercy? / For sothe, that were nat my worship. / For right as men seyn, that "over-greet hom-linesse engendreth dispreysinge," so fareth it by to greet humylitee or mekenesse.' /

§ 56. Thanne bigan dame Prudence to maken semblant of wratthe, and seyde, / 'certes, sir, sauf your grace, I love your honour and your profit as I do myn owené, and ever have doon; / ne ye ne noon other syen never the contrarie. / And yit, if I hadde seyd that ye sholde han purchaced the pees and the reconsiliacioun, I ne hadde nat muchel mistaken me, ne seyd amis. / For the wyse man seith: "the dissensioun biginneth by another man, and the reconsiling bi-ginneth by thy-self." / And the prophete seith: "flee shrewednesse and do goodnesse; / seke pees and folwe it, as muchel as in thee is." / Yet seye I nat that ye shul rather pursue to your adversaries for pees than they shuln to yow; / for I knowe wel that ye been so hard-herted, that ye wol do no-thing for me. / And Salomon seith: "he that hath over-hard an herte, atte laste he shal mishappe and mistyde." ' /

§ 57. Whanne Melibee hadde herd dame Prudence maken semblant of wratthe, he seydè in this wyse, / 'dame, I prey yow that ye be nat displesed of thinges that I seye; / for ye knowe wel that I am angry and wrooth, and that is no wonder; / and they that been wrothe witen nat wel what they doon, ne what they seyn. / Therfore the prophete seith: that "troubled eyen han no cleer sighte." / But seyeth and conseileth me as yow lyketh; for I am redy to do right as ye wol desyre; / and if ye repreve me of my folye, I am the more holden to love yow and to preyse yow. / For Salomon seith: that "he that repreveth him that doth folye, / he shal finde gretter grace than he that deceyveth him by swete wordes." ' /

§ 58. Thanne seide dame Pru-

dence, 'I make no semblant of wratthe ne anger but for your grete profit. / For Salomon seith: "he is more worth, that repreveth or chydeth a fool for his folye, shewinge him semblant of wratthe, / than he that supporteth him and preyseth him in his misdoinge, and laugheth at his folye." / And this same Salomon seith afterward: that "by the sorweful visage of a man," that is to seyn, by the sory and hevy countenaunce of a man, / "the fool correcteth and amendeth himself." '/

§ 59. Thanne seyde Melibee, 'I shal nat conne answere to so manye faire resouns as ye putten to me and shewen. / Seyeth shortly your wil and your conseil, and I am al ready to fulfille and parfourne it.' /

§ 60. Thanne dame Prudence discovered al hir wil to him, and seyde, / 'I conseille yow,' quod she, 'aboven alle thinges, that ye make pees bitwene god and yow; / and beth reconsiled un-to him and to his grace. / For as I have seyd yow heer-biforn, god hath suffred yow to have this tribulacioun and disese for your sinnes. / And if ye do as I sey yow, god wol sende your adversaries un-to yow, / and maken hem fallen at your feet, redy to do your wil and your comandements. / For Salomon seith: "whan the condicioun of man is plesaunt and likinge to god, / he chaungeth the hertes of the mannes adversaries, and constreyneth hem to biseken him of pees and of grace." / And I prey yow, lat me speke with your adversaries in privee place; / for they shul nat knowe that it be of your wil or your assent. / And thanne, whan I knowe hir wil and hir entente, I may conseille yow the more seurly.' /

§ 61. 'Dame,' quod Melibee, 'dooth your wil and your lykinge, / for I putte me hoolly in your disposicioun and ordinaunce.' /

§ 62. Thanne Dame Prudence, whan she saugh the gode wil of her housbonde, delibered and took avys in hir-self, / thinkinge how she mighte bringe this nede un-to a good conclusioun and to a good ende. / And whan she saugh hir tyme, she sente for thise adversaries to come un-to hir in-to a privee place, / and shewed wysly un-to hem the grete goodes that comen of pees, / and the grete harmes and perils that been in werre; / and seyde to hem in a goodly manere, how that hem oughte have greet repentaunce / of the iniurie and wrong that they hadden doon to Melibee hir lord, and to hir, and to hir doghter. /

§ 63. And whan they herden the goodliche wordes of dame Prudence, / they weren so surprised and ravisshed, and hadden so greet Ioye of hir, that wonder was to telle. / 'A! lady!' quod they, 'ye han shewed un-to us "the blessinge of swetnesse," after the sawe of David the prophete; / for the reconsilinge which we been nat worthy to have in no manere, / but we oghte requeren it with greet contricioun and humilitee, / ye of your grete goodnesse have presented unto us. / Now see we wel that the science and the conninge of Salomon is ful trewe; / for he seith: that "swete wordes multiplyen and encresen freendes, and maken shrewes to be debonaire and meke." /

§ 64. 'Certes,' quod they, 'we putten our dede and al our matere and cause al hoolly in your goode wil; / and been redy to obeye to the speche and comandement of my lord Melibee. / And therfore, dere and benigne lady, we preyen yow and biseke yow as mekely as we conne and mowen, / that it lyke un-to your grete goodnesse to fulfillen in dede your goodliche wordes; / for we consideren and knowlichen that we han offended and greved my lord Melibee out of mesure; / so ferforth, that we be nat of power to maken hise

amendes. / And therfore we oblige and binden us and our freendes to doon al his wil and hise comandements. / But peraventure he hath swich hevinesse and swich wratthe to us-ward, by-cause of our offence, / that he wole enioyne us swich a peyne as we mowe nat bere ne sustene. / And therfore, noble lady, we biseke to your wommanly pitee, / to taken swich avysement in this nede, that we, ne our freendes, be nat desherited ne destroyed thurgh our folye.' /

§ 65. 'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'it is an hard thing and right perilous, / that a man putte him al outrely in the arbitracioun and Iuggement, and in the might and power of hise enemys. / For Salomon seith: "leveth me, and yeveth credence to that I shal seyn; I seye," quod he, "ye peple, folk, and governours of holy chirche, / to thy sone, to thy wyf, to thy freend, ne to thy brother / ne yeve thou never might ne maistrie of thy body, whyl thou livest." / Now sithen he defendeth, that man shal nat yeven to his brother ne to his freend the might of his body, / by a strenger resoun he defendeth and forbedeth a man to yeven him-self to his enemy. / And nathelees I conseille you, that ye mistruste nat my lord. / For I woot wel and knowe verraily, that he is debonaire and meke, large, curteys, / and nothing desyrous ne coveitous of good ne richesse. / For ther nis no-thing in this world that he desyreth, save only worship and honour. / Forther-more I knowe wel, and am right seur, that he shal no-thing doon in this nede without my conseil. / And I shal so werken in this cause, that, by grace of our lord god, ye shul been reconsiled un-to us.' /

§ 66. Thanne seyden they with o vois, 'worshipful lady, we putten us and our goodes al fully in your wil and disposicioun; / and been redy to comen, what day that it lyke un-to your noblesse to limite us or assigne us, / for to maken our obligacioun and bond as strong as it lyketh un-to your goodnesse; / that we mowe fulfille the wille of yow and of my lord Melibee.' /

§ 67. Whan dame Prudence hadde herd the answeres of thise men, she bad hem goon agayn prively; / and she retourned to hir lord Melibee, and tolde him how she fond hise adversaries ful repentant, / knowlechinge ful lowely hir sinnes and trespas, and how they were redy to suffren al peyne, / requiringe and preyinge him of mercy and pitee. /

§ 68. Thanne seyde Melibee, 'he is wel worthy to have pardoun and foryifnessé of his sinne, that excuseth nat his sinne, / but knowlecheth it and repenteth him, axinge indulgence. / For Senek seith: "ther is the remissioun and foryifnesse, where-as confessioun is;" / for confession is neighebore to innocence. / And he seith in another place: "he that hath shame for his sinne and knowlecheth it, is worthy remissioun." And therfore I assente and conferme me to have pees; / but it is good that we do it nat with-outen the assent and wil of our freendes.' /

§ 69. Thanne was Prudence right glad and Ioyeful, and seyde, / 'Certes, sir,' quod she, 'ye han wel and goodly answered. / For right as by the conseil, assent, and help of your freendes, ye han been stired to venge yow and maken werre, / right so with-outen hir conseil shul ye nat accorden yow, ne have pees with your adversaries. / For the lawe seith: "ther nis no-thing so good by wey of kinde, as a thing to been unbounde by him that it was y-bounde." ' /

§ 70. And thanne dame Prudence, with-outen delay or taryinge, sente anon hir messages for hir kin, and for hir olde freendes whiche

that were trewe and wyse, / and tolde hem by ordre, in the presence of Melibee, al this matere as it is aboven expressed and declared; / and preyden hem that they wolde yeven hir avys and conseil, what best were to doon in this nede. / And whan Melibees freendes hadde taken hir avys and deliberacioun of the forseide matere, / and hadden examined it by greet bisinesse and greet diligence, / they yave ful conseil for to have pees and reste; / and that Melibee sholde receyve with good herte hise adversaries to foryifnesse and mercy. /

§ 71. And whan dame Prudence hadde herd the assent of hir lord Melibee, and the conseil of hise freendes, / accorde with hir wille and hir entencioun, / she was wonderly glad in hir herte, and seyde: / 'ther is an old proverbe,' quod she, 'seith: that "the goodnesse that thou mayst do this day, do it; / and abyde nat ne delaye it nat til to-morwe." / And therfore I conseille that ye sende your messages, swiche as been discrete and wyse, / un-to your adversaries; tellinge hem, on your bihalve, / that if they wole trete of pees and of accord, / that they shape hem, with-outen delay or tarying, to comen un-to us.' / Which thing parfourned was in dede. / And whanne thise trespassours and repentinge folk of hir folies, that is to seyn, the adversaries of Melibee, / hadden herd what thise messagers seyden un-to hem, / they weren right glad and Ioyeful, and answereden ful mekely and benignely, / yeldinge graces and thankinges to hir lord Melibee and to al his companye; / and shopen hem, with-outen delay, to go with the messagers, and obeye to the comandement of hir lord Melibee. /

§ 72. And right anon they token hir wey to the court of Melibee, / and token with hem somme of hir trewe freendes, to maken feith for hem and for to been hir borwes. / And whan they were comen to the presence of Melibee, he seyde hem thise wordes: / 'it standeth thus,' quod Melibee, 'and sooth it is, that ye, / causeless, and with-outen skile and resoun, / han doon grete iniuries and wronges to me and to my wyf Prudence, and to my doghter also. / For ye han entred in-to myn hous by violence, / and have doon swich outrage, that alle men knowen wel that ye have deserved the deeth; / and therfore wol I knowe and wite of yow, / whether ye wol putte the punissement and the chastysinge and the vengeance of this outrage in the wil of me and of my wyf Prudence; or ye wol nat?' /

§ 73. Thanne the wyseste of hem three answerde for hem alle, and seyde: / 'sire,' quod he, 'we knowen wel, that we been unworthy to comen un-to the court of so greet a lord and so worthy as ye been. / For we han so greetly mistaken us, and han offended and agilt in swich a wyse agayn your heigh lordshipe, / that trewely we han deserved the deeth. / But yet, for the grete goodnesse and debonairetee that all the world witnesseth of your persone, / we submitten us to the excellence and benignitee of your gracious lordshipe, / and been redy to obeie to alle your comandements; / bisekinge yow, that of your merciable pitee ye wol considere our grete repentaunce and lowe submissioun, / and graunten us foryevenesse of our outrageous trespas and offence. / For wel we knowe, that your liberal grace and mercy strecchen hem ferther in-to goodnesse, than doon our outrageouse giltes and trespas in-to wikkednesse; / al-be-it that cursedly and dampnably we han agilt agayn your heigh lordshipe.' /

§ 74. Thanne Melibee took hem up fro the ground ful benignely, / and receyved hir obligaciouns and

hir bondes by hir othes up-on hir plegges and borwes, / and assigned hem a certeyn day to retourne un-to his court, / for to accepte and receyve the sentence and Iugement that Melibee wolde comande to be doon on hem by the causes aforeseyd; / whiche thinges ordeyned, every man retourned to his hous. /

§ 75. And whan that dame Prudence saugh hir tyme, she freyned and axed hir lord Melibee, / what vengeance he thoughte to taken of hise adversaries? /

§ 76. To which Melibee answerde and seyde, 'certes,' quod he, 'I thinke and purpose me fully / to desherite hem of al that ever they han, and for to putte hem in exil for ever.' /

§ 77. 'Certes,' quod dame Prudence, 'this were a cruel sentence, and muchel agayn resoun. / For ye been riche y-nough, and han no nede of other mennes good; / and ye mighte lightly in this wyse gete yow a coveitous name, / which is a vicious thing, and oghte been eschewed of every good man. / For after the sawe of the word of the apostle: "coveitise is rote of alle harmes." / And therfore, it were bettre for yow to lese so muchel good of your owene, than for to taken of hir good in this manere. / For bettre it is to lesen good with worshipe, than it is to winne good with vileinye and shame. / And every man oghte to doon his diligence and his busynesse to geten him a good name. / And yet shal he nat only bisie him in kepinge of his good name, / but he shal also enforcen him alwey to do som-thing by which he may renovelle his good name; / for it is writen, that "the olde good loos or good name of a man is sone goon and passed, whan it is nat newed ne renovelled." / And as touchinge that ye seyn, ye wole exile your adversaries, / that thinketh me muchel agayn resoun and out of mesure, / considered the power that they han yeve yow up-on hem-self. / And it is writen, that "he is worthy to lesen his privilege that misuseth the might and the power that is yeven him." / And I sette cas ye mighte enioyne hem that peyne by right and by lawe, / which I trowe ye mowe nat do, / I seye, ye mighte nat putten it to execucioun per-aventure, / and thanne were it lykly to retourne to the werre as it was biforn. / And therfore, if ye wole that men do yow obeisance, ye moste demen more curteisly; / this is to seyn, ye moste yeven more esy sentences and Iugements. / For it is writen, that "he that most curteisly comandeth, to him men most obeyen." / And therfore, I prey yow that in this necessitee and in this nede, ye caste yow to overcome your herte. / For Senek seith: that "he that overcometh his herte, overcometh twyes." / And Tullius seith: "ther is no-thing so comendable in a greet lord / as whan he is debonaire and meke, and appeseth him lightly." / And I prey yow that ye wole forbere now to do vengeance, / in swich a manere, that your goode name may be kept and conserved; / and that men mowe have cause and matere to preyse yow of pitee and of mercy; / and that ye have no cause to repente yow of thing that ye doon. / For Senek seith: "he overcometh in an yvel manere, that repenteth him of his victorie." /. Wherfore I pray yow, lat mercy been in your minde and in your herte, / to theffect and entente that god almighty have mercy on yow in his laste Iugement. / For seint Iame seith in his epistle: "Iugement withouten mercy shal be doon to him, that hath no mercy of another wight." /

§ 78. Whanne Melibee hadde herd the grete skiles and resouns of dame Prudence, and hir wise informaciouns and techinges, / his herte gan enclyne to the wil of his wyf,

consideringe hir trewe entente; / and conformed him anon, and assented fully to werken after hir conseil; / and thonked god, of whom procedeth al vertu and alle goodnesse, that him sente a wyf of so greet discrecioun. / And whan the day cam that hise adversaries sholde apperen in his presence, / he spak unto hem ful goodly, and seyde in this wyse: / 'al-be-it so that of your pryde and presumpcioun and folie, and of your necligence and unconninge, / ye have misborn yow and trespassed un-to me; / yet, for as much as I see and biholde your grete humilitee, / and that ye been sory and repentant of your giltes, / it constreyneth me to doon yow grace and mercy. / Therfore I receyve yow to my grace, / and foryeve yow outrely alle the offences, iniuries, and wronges, that ye have doon agayn me and myne; / to this effect and to this ende, that god of his endelees mercy / wole at the tyme of our dyinge foryeven us our giltes that we han trespassed to him in this wrecched world. / For doutelees, if we be sory and repentant of the sinnes and giltes whiche we han trespassed in the sighte of our lord god, / he is so free and so merciable, / that he wole foryeven us our giltes, / and bringen us to his blisse that never hath ende. Amen.' /

Here is ended Chaucers Tale of Melibee and of Dame Prudence.

THE MONK'S PROLOGUE.

The mery wordes of the Host to the Monk.

WHAN ended was my tale of Melibee,
And of Prudence and hir benignitee,
Our hoste seyde, 'as I am faithful man,
And by the precious *corpus Madrian*,
I hadde lever than a barel ale
That goode lief my wyf hadde herd this tale!
For she nis no-thing of swich pacience
As was this Melibeus wyf Prudence.
By goddes bones! whan I bete my knaves,
She bringth me forth the grete clobbed staves,
And cryeth, "slee the dogges everichoon,
And brek hem, bothe bak and every boon."
And if that any neighebor of myne
Wol nat in chirche to my wyf enclyne,
Or be so hardy to hir to trespace,
Whan she comth hoom, she rampeth in my face,
And cryeth, "false coward, wreek thy wyf,
By *corpus* bones! I wol have thy knyf,
And thou shalt have my distaf and go spinne!"
Fro day to night right thus she wol biginne; —
"Allas!" she seith, "that ever I was shape
To wedde a milksop or a coward ape,
That wol be overlad with every wight!
Thou darst nat stonden by thy wyves right!"
This is my lyf, but-if that I wol fighte;
And out at dore anon I moot me dighte,
Or elles I am but lost, but-if that I
Be lyk a wilde leoun fool-hardy.
I woot wel she wol do me slee som day
Som neighebor, and thanne go my wey.
For I am perilous with knyf in honde,
Al be it that I dar nat hir withstonde,
For she is big in armes, by my feith,
That shal he finde, that hir misdooth or seith.
But lat us passe awey fro this matere.
My lord the Monk,' quod he, 'be mery of chere;
For ye shul telle a tale trewely.
Lo! Rouchestre stant heer faste by!

Ryd forth, myn owene lord, brek nat our game,
But, by my trouthe, I knowe nat your name,
Wher shal I calle yow my lord dan Iohn,
Or dan Thomas, or elles dan Albon? 3120
Of what hous be ye, by your fader kin?
I vow to god, thou hast a ful fair skin,
It is a gentil pasture ther thou goost;
Thou art nat lyk a penaunt or a goost.
Upon my feith, thou art som officer, 3125
Som worthy sexteyn, or som celerer,
For by my fader soule, as to my doom,
Thou art a maister whan thou art at hoom;
No povre cloisterer, ne no novys,
But a governour, wyly and wys. 3130
And therwithal of brawnes and of bones
A wel-faring persone for the nones.
I pray to god, yeve him confusioun
That first thee broghte un-to religioun;
Thou woldest han been a trede-foul aright. 3135
Haddestow as greet a leve, as thou hast might
To parfourne al thy lust in engendrure,
Thou haddest bigeten many a creature.
Alas! why werestow so wyd a cope?
God yeve me sorwe! but, and I were a pope, 3140
Not only thou, but every mighty man,
Thogh he were shorn ful hye upon his pan,
Sholde have a wyf; for al the world is lorn!
Religioun hath take up al the corn
Of treding, and we borel men ben shrimpes! 3145
Of feble trees ther comen wrecched impes.
This maketh that our heires been so sclendre
And feble, that they may nat wel engendre.
This maketh that our wyves wol assaye
Religious folk, for ye may bettre paye
Of Venus payements than mowe we; 3151
God woot, no lussheburghes payen ye!
But be nat wrooth, my lord, for that I pleye;
Ful ofte in game a sooth I have herd seye.' 3154

This worthy monk took al in pacience,
And seyde, 'I wol doon al my diligence,
As fer as souneth in-to honestee,
To telle yow a tale, or two, or three.
And if yow list to herkne hiderward,
I wol yow seyn the lyf of seint Edward;
Or elles first Tragedies wol I telle 3161
Of whiche I have an hundred in my celle.
Tragedie is to seyn a certeyn storie,
As olde bokes maken us memorie,
Of him that stood in greet prosperitee
And is y-fallen out of heigh degree 3166
Into miserie, and endeth wrecchedly.
And they ben versifyed comunly
Of six feet, which men clepe *exametron*.
In prose eek been endyted many oon,
And eek in metre, in many a sondry wyse. 3171
Lo! this declaring oughte y-nough suffise.
Now herkneth, if yow lyketh for to here;
But first I yow biseke in this matere,
Though I by ordre telle nat thise thinges, 3175
Be it of popes, emperours, or kinges,
After hir ages, as men writen finde,
But telle hem som bifore and som bihinde,
As it now comth un-to my remembraunce; 3179
Have me excused of myn ignoraunce.'

Explicit.

THE MONKES TALE.

Here biginneth the Monkes Tale, de Casibus Virorum Illustrium.

I wol biwayle in maner of Tragedie
The harm of hem that stode in heigh degree,
And fillen so that ther nas no remedie
To bringe hem out of hir adversitee;
For certein, whan that fortune list to flee,
Ther may no man the cours of hir withholde;
Lat no man truste on blind prosperitee;
Be war by thise ensamples trewe and olde.

Lucifer.

At Lucifer, though he an angel were,
And nat a man, at him I wol biginne;
For, thogh fortune may non angel dere,
From heigh degree yet fel he for his sinne
Doun in-to helle, wher he yet is inne.
O Lucifer! brightest of angels alle,
Now artow Sathanas, that maist nat twinne
Out of miserie, in which that thou art falle.

Adam.

Lo Adam, in the feld of Damassene,
With goddes owene finger wroght was he,
And nat bigeten of mannes sperme unclene,
And welte al Paradys, saving o tree.
Had never worldly man so heigh degree
As Adam, til he for misgovernaunce
Was drive out of his hye prosperitee
To labour, and to helle, and to meschaunce.

Sampson.

Lo Sampson, which that was annunciat
By thangel, longe er his nativitee,
And was to god almighty consecrat,
And stood in noblesse, whyl he mighte see.
Was never swich another as was he,
To speke of strengthe, and therwith hardinesse;
But to his wyves tolde he his secree,
Through which he slow him-self, for wrecchednesse.

Sampson, this noble almighty champioun,
Withouten wepen save his hondes tweye,
He slow and al to-rente the leoun,
Toward his wedding walking by the weye.
His false wyf coude him so plese and preye
Til she his conseil knew, and she untrewe
Un-to his foos his conseil gan biwreye,
And him forsook, and took another newe.

Three hundred foxes took Sampson for ire,
And alle hir tayles he togider bond,
And sette the foxes tayles alle on fire,
For he on every tayl had knit a brond;
And they brende alle the cornes in that lond,
And alle hir oliveres and vynes eek,
A thousand men he slow eek with his hond,
And had no wepen but an asses cheek.

Whan they were slayn, so thursted him that he
Was wel ny lorn, for which he gan to preye
That god wolde on his peyne han som pitee,
And sende him drinke, or elles moste he deye;
And of this asses cheke, that was dreye,
Out of a wang-tooth sprang anon a welle,
Of which he drank y-nogh, shortly to seye,
Thus heelp him god, as *Iudicum* can telle.

By verray force, at Gazan, on a night,
Maugree Philistiens of that citee,
The gates of the toun he hath up-plight,
And on his bak y-caried hem hath he

Hye on an hille that men mighte hem see.
O noble almighty Sampson, leef and dere,
Had thou nat told to wommen thy secree,
In al this worlde ne hadde been thy pere!

This Sampson never sicer drank ne wyn,
Ne on his heed cam rasour noon ne shere,
By precept of the messager divyn,
For alle his strengthes in his heres were;
And fully twenty winter, yeer by yere,
He hadde of Israel the governaunce.
But sone shal he wepen many a tere,
For wommen shal him bringen to meschaunce!

Un-to his lemman Dalida he tolde
That in his heres al his strengthe lay,
And falsly to his fo-men she him solde.
And sleping in hir barme up-on a day
She made to clippe or shere his heer awey,
And made his fo-men al his craft espyen;
And whan that they him fonde in this array,
They bounde him faste, and putten out his yën.

But er his heer were clipped or y-shave,
Ther was no bond with which men might him binde;
But now is he in prisoun in a cave,
Wher-as they made him at the querne grinde.
O noble Sampson, strongest of mankinde,
O whylom luge in glorie and in richesse,
Now maystow wepen with thyn yën blinde,
Sith thou fro wele art falle in wrecchednesse.

Thende of this caytif was as I shal seye;
His fo-men made a feste upon a day,
And made him as hir fool bifore hem pleye,
And this was in a temple of greet array.
But atte laste he made a foul affray;
For he two pilers shook, and made hem falle,
And doun fil temple and al, and ther it lay,
And slow him-self, and eek his fo-men alle.

This is to seyn, the princes everichoon,
And eek three thousand bodies wer ther slayn
With falling of the grete temple of stoon.
Of Sampson now wol I na-more seyn.
Beth war by this ensample old and playn
That no men telle hir conseil til hir wyves
Of swich thing as they wolde han secree fayn,
If that it touche hir limmes or hir lyves.

Hercules.

Of Hercules the sovereyn conquerour
Singen his workes laude and heigh renoun;
For in his tyme of strengthe he was the flour.
He slow, and rafte the skin of the leoun;
He of Centauros leyde the boost adoun;
He Arpies slow, the cruel briddes felle;
He golden apples rafte of the dragoun;
He drow out Cerberus, the hound of helle:

He slow the cruel tyrant Busirus,
And made his hors to frete him, flesh and boon;
He slow the firy serpent venimous;
Of Achelois two hornes, he brak oon;
And he slow Cacus in a cave of stoon;
He slow the geaunt Antheus the stronge;
He slow the grisly boor, and that anoon,
And bar the heven on his nekke longe.

Was never wight, sith that the world bigan,
That slow so many monstres as dide he.
Thurgh-out this wyde world his name ran,
What for his strengthe, and for his heigh bountee,
And every reaume wente he for to see.
He was so strong that no man mighte him lette;

At bothe the worldes endes, seith Trophee,
In stede of boundes, he a piler sette.

A lemman hadde this noble champioun,
That highte Dianira, fresh as May;
And, as thise clerkes maken mencioun,
She hath him sent a sherte fresh and gay.
Allas! this sherte, allas and weylaway!
Envenimed was so subtilly with-alle,
That, er that he had wered it half a day,
It made his flesh al from his bones falle.

But nathelees somme clerkes hir excusen
By oon that highte Nessus, that it maked;
Be as be may, I wol hir noght accusen;
But on his bak this sherte he wered al naked,
Til that his flesh was for the venim blaked.
And whan he sey noon other remedye,
In hote coles he hath him-selven raked,
For with no venim deyned him to dye.

Thus starf this worthy mighty Hercules;
Lo, who may truste on fortune any throwe?
For him that folweth al this world of prees,
Er he be war, is ofte y-leyd ful lowe.
Ful wys is he that can him-selven knowe.
Beth war, for whan that fortune list to glose,
Than wayteth she hir man to overthrowe
By swich a wey as he wolde leest suppose.

Nabugodonosor (Nebuchadnezzar).

The mighty trone, the precious tresor,
The glorious ceptre and royal magestee
That hadde the king Nabugodonosor,
With tonge unnethe may discryved be.
He twyes wan Ierusalem the citee;
The vessel of the temple he with him ladde.
At Babiloyne was his sovereyn see,
In which his glorie and his delyt he hadde.

The fairest children of the blood royal
Of Israel he leet do gelde anoon,
And maked ech of hem to been his thral.

Amonges othere Daniel was oon,
That was the wysest child of everichoon;
For he the dremes of the king expouned,
Wher-as in Chaldey clerk ne was ther noon
That wiste to what fyn his dremes souned.

This proude king leet make a statue of golde,
Sixty cubytes long, and seven in brede,
To which image bothe yonge and olde
Comaunded he to loute, and have in drede;
Or in a fourneys ful of flambes rede
He shal be brent, that wolde noght obeye.
But never wolde assente to that dede
Daniel, ne his yonge felawes tweye.

This king of kinges proud was and elaat,
He wende that god, that sit in magestee,
Ne mighte him nat bireve of his estaat:
But sodeynly he loste his dignitee,
And lyk a beste him semed for to be,
And eet hay as an oxe, and lay theroute;
In reyn with wilde bestes walked he,
Til certein tyme was y-come aboute.

And lyk an egles fetheres wexe his heres,
His nayles lyk a briddes clawes were;
Til god relessed him a certein yeres,
And yaf him wit; and than with many a tere
He thanked god, and ever his lyf in fere
Was he to doon amis, or more trespace,
And, til that tyme he leyd was on his bere,
He knew that god was ful of might and grace.

Balthasar (Belshazzar)

His sone, which that highte Balthasar,
That heeld the regne after his fader day,
He by his fader coude nought be war,
For proud he was of herte and of array;
And eek an ydolastre was he ay.
His hye estaat assured him in pryde.

But fortune caste him doun, and ther he lay,
And sodeynly his regne gan divyde.

A feste he made un-to his lordes alle
Up-on a tyme, and bad hem blythe be,
And than his officeres gan he calle —
'Goth, bringeth forth the vessels,' [tho] quod he,
'Which that my fader, in his prosperitee,
Out of the temple of Ierusalem birafte,
And to our hye goddes thanke we
Of honour, that our eldres with us lafte.'

His wyf, his lordes, and his concubynes
Ay dronken, whyl hir appetytes laste,
Out of thise noble vessels sundry wynes;
And on a wal this king his yën caste,
And sey an hond armlees, that wroot ful faste,
For fere of which he quook and syked sore.
This hond, that Balthasar so sore agaste,
Wroot *Mane, techel, phares*, and na-more.

In al that lond magicien was noon
That coude expoune what this lettre mente;
But Daniel expouned it anoon,
And seyde, 'king, god to thy fader lente
Glorie and honour, regne, tresour, rente:
And he was proud, and no-thing god ne dradde,
And therfor god gret wreche up-on him sente,
And him birafte the regne that he hadde.

He was out cast of mannes companye,
With asses was his habitacioun,
And eet hey as a beste in weet and drye,
Til that he knew, by grace and by resoun,
That god of heven hath dominacioun
Over every regne and every creature;
And thanne had god of him compassioun,
And him restored his regne and his figure.

Eek thou, that art his sone, art proud also,
And knowest alle thise thinges verraily,
And art rebel to god, and art his fo.
Thou drank eek of his vessels boldely;
Thy wyf eek and thy wenches sinfully
Dronke of the same vessels sondry wynes,
And heriest false goddes cursedly;
Therfor to thee y-shapen ful gret pyne is.

This hand was sent from god, that on the walle
Wroot *mane, techel, phares*, truste me;
Thy regne is doon, thou weyest noght at alle;
Divyded is thy regne, and it shal be
To Medes and to Perses yeven,' quod he.
And thilke same night this king was slawe,
And Darius occupyeth his degree,
Thogh he therto had neither right ne lawe.

Lordinges, ensample heer-by may ye take
How that in lordshipe is no sikernesse;
For whan fortune wol a man forsake,
She bereth awey his regne and his richesse,
And eek his freendes, bothe more and lesse;
For what man that hath freendes thurgh fortune,
Mishap wol make hem enemys, I gesse:
This proverbe is ful sooth and ful commune.

Cenobia (Zenobia).

Cenobia, of Palimerie quene,
As writen Persiens of hir noblesse,
So worthy was in armes and so kene,
That no wight passed hir in hardinesse,
Ne in linage, ne in other gentillesse.
Of kinges blode of Perse is she descended;
I seye nat that she hadde most fairnesse,
But of hir shape she mighte nat been amended.

From hir childhede I finde that she fledde
Office of wommen, and to wode she wente;
And many a wilde hertes blood she shedde

With arwes brode that she to hem sente.
She was so swift that she anon hem hente,
And whan that she was elder, she wolde kille
Leouns, lepardes, and beres al to-rente,
And in hir armes welde hem at hir wille.

She dorste wilde beestes dennes seke,
And rennen in the montaignes al the night,
And slepen under a bush, and she coude eke
Wrastlen by verray force and verray might
With any yong man, were he never so wight;
Ther mighte no-thing in hir armes stonde.
She kepte hir maydenhod from every wight,
To no man deigned hir for to be bonde.

But atte laste hir frendes han hir maried
To Odenake, a prince of that contree,
Al were it so that she hem longe taried;
And ye shul understonde how that he
Hadde swiche fantasyes as hadde she,
But nathelees, whan they were knit infere,
They lived in Ioye and in felicitee;
For ech of hem hadde other leef and dere.

Save o thing, that she never wolde assente
By no wey, that he sholde by hir lye
But ones, for it was hir pleyn entente
To have a child, the world to multiplye;
And al-so sone as that she mighte espye
That she was nat with childe with that dede,
Than wolde she suffre him doon his fantasye
Eft-sone, and nat but ones, out of drede.

And if she were with childe at thilke cast,
Na-more sholde he pleyen thilke game
Til fully fourty dayes weren past;
Than wolde she ones suffre him do the same.
Al were this Odenake wilde or tame,
He gat na-more of hir, for thus she seyde,
'It was to wyves lecherye and shame
In other cas, if that men with hem pleyde.'

Two sones by this Odenake hadde she,
The whiche she kepte in vertu and letture;
But now un-to our tale turne we.
I seye, so worshipful a creature,
And wys therwith, and large with mesure,
So penible in the werre, and curteis eke,
Ne more labour mighte in werre endure,
Was noon, thogh al this world men sholde seke.

Hir riche array ne mighte nat be told
As wel in vessel as in hir clothing;
She was al clad in perree and in gold,
And eek she lafte noght, for noon hunting,
To have of sondry tonges ful knowing,
Whan that she leyser hadde, and for to entende
To lernen bokes was al hir lyking,
How she in vertu mighte hir lyf dispende.

And, shortly of this storie for to trete,
So doughty was hir housbonde and eek she,
That they conquered many regnes grete
In the orient, with many a fair citee,
Apertenaunt un-to the magestee
Of Rome, and with strong hond helde hem ful faste;
Ne never mighte hir fo-men doon hem flee,
Ay whyl that Odenakes dayes laste.

Hir batailes, who-so list hem for to rede,
Agayn Sapor the king and othere mo,
And how that al this proces fil in dede,
Why she conquered and what title had therto,

And after of hir meschief and hir wo,
How that she was biseged and y-take,
Let him un-to my maister Petrark go,
That writ y-nough of this, I undertake.

When Odenake was deed, she mightily
The regnes heeld, and with hir propre honde
Agayn hir foos she faught so cruelly,
That ther nas king ne prince in al that londe
That he nas glad, if that he grace fonde,
That she ne wolde up-on his lond werreye;
With hir they made alliaunce by bonde
To been in pees, and lete hir ryde and pleye.

The emperour of Rome, Claudius,
Ne him bifore, the Romayn Galien,
Ne dorste never been so corageous,
Ne noon Ermyn, ne noon Egipcien,
Ne Surrien, ne noon Arabien,
Within the feld that dorste with hir fighte
Lest that she wolde hem with hir hondes slen,
Or with hir meynee putten hem to flighte.

In kinges habit wente hir sones two,
As heires of hir fadres regnes alle,
And Hermanno, and Thymalaö
Her names were, as Persiens hem calle.
But ay fortune hath in hir hony galle;
This mighty quene may no whyl endure.
Fortune out of hir regne made hir falle
To wrecchednesse and to misaventure.

Aurelian, whan that the governaunce
Of Rome cam in-to his hondes tweye,
He shoop up-on this queen to do vengeaunce,
And with his legiouns he took his weye
Toward Cenobie, and, shortly for to seye,
He made hir flee, and atte laste hir hente,
And fettred hir, and eek hir children tweye,
And wan the lond, and hoom to Rome he wente.

Amonges othere thinges that he wan,
Hir char, that was with gold wrought and perree,
This grete Romayn, this Aurelian,
Hath with him lad, for that men sholde it see.
Biforen his triumphe walketh she
With gilte cheynes on hir nekke hanging;
Corouned was she, as after hir degree,
And ful of perree charged hir clothing.

Allas, fortune! she that whylom was
Dredful to kinges and to emperoures,
Now gaureth al the peple on hir, allas!
And she that helmed was in starke stoures,
And wan by force tounes stronge and toures,
Shal on hir heed now were a vitremyte;
And she that bar the ceptre ful of floures
Shal bere a distaf, hir cost for to quyte.

(NERO *follows in* T.; *see* p. 591.)

DE PETRO REGE ISPANNIE.

O noble, o worthy Petro, glorie of Spayne,
Whom fortune heeld so hy in magestee,
Wel oughten men thy pitous deeth complayne!
Out of thy lond thy brother made thee flee;
And after, at a sege, by subtiltee,
Thou were bitrayed, and lad un-to his tente,
Wher-as he with his owene hond slow thee,
Succeding in thy regne and in thy rente.

The feeld of snow, with thegle of blak ther-inne,
Caught with the lymrod, coloured as the glede,
He brew this cursednes and al this sinne.
The 'wikked nest' was werker of this nede;
Noght Charles Oliver, that ay took hede
Of trouthe and honour, but of Armorike
Genilon Oliver, corrupt for mede,

Broghte this worthy king in swich a brike.

De Petro Rege de Cipro.

O worthy Petro, king of Cypre, also,
That Alisaundre wan by heigh maistrye,
Ful many a hethen wroghtestow ful wo,
Of which thyn owene liges hadde envye,
And, for no thing but for thy chivalrye,
They in thy bedde han slayn thee by the morwe.
Thus can fortune hir wheel governe and gye,
And out of Ioye bringe men to sorwe.

De Barnabo de Lumbardia.

Of Melan grete Barnabo Viscounte,
God of delyt, and scourge of Lumbardye,
Why sholde I nat thyn infortune acounte,
Sith in estaat thou clombe were so hye?
Thy brother sone, that was thy double allye,
For he thy nevew was, and sone-in-lawe,
With-inne his prisoun made thee to dye;
But why, ne how, noot I that thou were slawe.

De Hugelino, Comite de Pize.

Of the erl Hugelyn of Pyse the langour
Ther may no tonge telle for pitee;
But litel out of Pyse stant a tour,
In whiche tour in prisoun put was he,
And with him been his litel children three.
The eldeste scarsly fyf yeer was of age.
Allas, fortune! it was greet crueltee
Swiche briddes for to putte in swiche a cage!

Dampned was he to deye in that prisoun,
For Roger, which that bisshop was of Pyse,
Hadde on him maad a fals suggestioun,
Thurgh which the peple gan upon him ryse,
And putten him to prisoun in swich wyse
As ye han herd, and mete and drink he hadde
So smal, that wel unnethe it may suffyse,
And therwith-al it was ful povre and badde.

And on a day bifil that, in that hour,
Whan that his mete wont was to be broght,
The gayler shette the dores of the tour.
He herde it wel,—but he spak right noght,
And in his herte anon ther fil a thoght,
That they for hunger wolde doon him dyen.
'Allas!' quod he, 'allas! that I was wroght!'
Therwith the teres fillen from his yën.

His yonge sone, that three yeer was of age,
Un-to him seyde, 'fader, why do ye wepe?
Whan wol the gayler bringen our potage,
Is ther no morsel breed that ye do kepe?
I am so hungry that I may nat slepe.
Now wolde god that I mighte slepen ever!
Than sholde nat hunger in my wombe crepe;
Ther is no thing, save breed, that me were lever.'

Thus day by day this child bigan to crye,
Til in his fadres barme adoun it lay,
And seyde, 'far-wel, fader, I moot dye,'
And kiste his fader, and deyde the same day.
And whan the woful fader deed it sey,
For wo his armes two he gan to byte,
And seyde, 'allas, fortune! and weylaway!
Thy false wheel my wo al may I wyte!'

His children wende that it for hunger was
That he his armes gnow, and nat for wo,
And seyde, 'fader, do nat so, allas!
But rather eet the flesh upon us two;
Our flesh thou yaf us, tak our flesh us fro
And eet y-nough:' right thus they to him seyde,
And after that, with-in a day or two,

They leyde hem in his lappe adoun, and deyde.

Him-self, despeired, eek for hunger starf;
Thus ended is this mighty Erl of Pyse;
From heigh estaat fortune awey him carf.
Of this Tragedie it oghte y-nough suffyse.
Who-so wol here it in a lenger wyse,
Redeth the grete poete of Itaille,
That highte Dant, for he can al devyse
Fro point to point, nat o word wol he faille.

NERO.

Al-though that Nero were as vicious
As any feend that lyth ful lowe adoun,
Yet he, as telleth us Swetonius,
This wyde world hadde in subieccioun,
Both Est and West, South and Septemtriouun;
Of rubies, saphires, and of perles whyte
Were alle his clothes brouded up and doun;
For he in gemmes greetly gan delyte.

More delicat, more pompous of array,
More proud was never emperour than he;
That ilke cloth, that he had wered o day,
After that tyme he nolde it never see.
Nettes of gold-thred hadde he gret plentee
To fisshe in Tybre, whan him liste pleye.
His lustes were al lawe in his decree,
For fortune as his freend him wolde obeye.

He Rome brende for his delicacye;
The senatours he slow up-on a day.
To here how men wolde wepe and crye;
And slow his brother, and by his sister lay.
His moder made he in pitous array;
For he hir wombe slitte, to biholde
Wher he conceyved was; so weilawey!
That he so litel of his moder tolde!

No tere out of his yën for that sighte
Ne cam, but seyde, 'a fair womman was she.'

Gret wonder is, how that he coude or mighte
Be domesman of hir dede beautee.
The wyn to bringen him comaunded he,
And drank anon; non other wo he made.
Whan might is Ioyned un-to crueltee,
Allas! to depe wol the venim wade!

In youthe a maister hadde this emperour,
To teche him letterure and curteisye,
For of moralitee he was the flour,
As in his tyme, but-if bokes lye;
And whyl this maister hadde of him maistrye,
He maked him so conning and so souple
That longe tyme it was er tirannye
Or any vyce dorste on him uncouple.

This Seneca, of which that I devyse,
By-cause Nero hadde of him swich drede,
For he fro vyces wolde him ay chastyse
Discreetly as by worde and nat by dede; —
'Sir,' wolde he seyn, 'an emperour moot nede
Be vertuous, and hate tirannye' —
For which he in a bath made him to blede
On bothe his armes, til he moste dye.

This Nero hadde eek of acustumaunce
In youthe ageyn his maister for to ryse,
Which afterward him thoughte a greet grevaunce;
Therfor he made him deyen in this wyse.
But natheles this Seneca the wyse
Chees in a bath to deye in this manere
Rather than han another tormentyse;
And thus hath Nero slayn his maistere.

Now fil it so that fortune list no lenger
The hye pryde of Nero to cheryce;
For though that he were strong, yet was she strenger;
She thoughte thus, 'by god, I am to nyce,
To sette a man that is fulfild of vyce
In heigh degree, and emperour hir calle.
By god, out of his sete I wol him tryce,
When he leest weneth, sonest shal he falle.'

The peple roos up-on him on a night
For his defaute, and whan he it espyed,
Out of his dores anon he hath him dight
Alone, and, ther he wende han ben allyed,
He knokked faste, and ay, the more he cryed,
The faster shette they the dores alle;
Tho wiste he wel he hadde him-self misgyed,
And wente his wey, no lenger dorste he calle.

The peple cryde and rombled up and doun,
That with his eres herde he how they seyde,
'Wher is this false tyraunt, this Neroun?'
For fere almost out of his wit he breyde,
And to his goddes pitously he preyde
For socour, but it mighte nat bityde.
For drede of this, him thoughte that he deyde,
And ran in-to a gardin, him to hyde.

And in this gardin fond he cherles tweye
That seten by a fyr ful greet and reed,
And to thise cherles two he gan to preye
To sleen him, and to girden of his heed,
That to his body, whan that he were deed,
Were no despyt y-doon, for his defame.
Him-self he slow, he coude no better reed,
Of which fortune lough, and hadde a game.

De Oloferno (Holofernes).

Was never capitayn under a king
That regnes mo putte in subieccioun,
Ne strenger was in feeld of alle thing,
As in his tyme, ne gretter of renoun,
Ne more pompous in heigh presumpcioun
Than Oloferne, which fortune ay kiste
So likerously, and ladde him up and doun
Til that his heed was of, er that he wiste.

Nat only that this world hadde him in awe
For lesinge of richesse or libertee,
But he made every man reneye his lawe.
'Nabugodonosor was god,' seyde he,
'Noon other god sholde adoured be.'
Ageyns his heste no wight dar trespace
Save in Bethulia, a strong citee,
Wher Eliachim a prest was of that place.

But tak kepe of the deeth of Olofern;
Amidde his host he dronke lay a night,
With-inne his tente, large as is a bern,
And yit, for al his pompe and al his might,
Iudith, a womman, as he lay upright,
Sleping, his heed of smoot, and from his tente
Ful prively she stal from every wight,
And with his heed unto hir toun she wente.

De Rege Anthiocho illustri.

What nedeth it of King Anthiochus
To telle his hye royal magestee,
His hye pryde, his werkes venimous?
For swich another was ther noon as he.
Rede which that he was in Machabee,
And rede the proude wordes that he seyde,
And why he fil fro heigh prosperitee,
And in an hill how wrechedly he deyde.

Fortune him hadde enhaunched so in pryde
That verraily he wende he mighte attayne
Unto the sterres, upon every syde,
And in balance weyen ech montayne,
And alle the flodes of the see restrayne.
And goddes peple hadde he most in hate,
Hem wolde he sleen in torment and in payne,
Wening that god ne mighte his pryde abate.

And for that Nichanor and Thimothee
Of Iewes weren venquisshed mightily,
Unto the Iewes swich an hate hadde he
That he bad greithe his char ful hastily,
And swoor, and seyde, ful despitously,
Unto Ierusalem he wolde eft-sone,
To wreken his ire on it ful cruelly;
But of his purpos he was let ful sone.

God for his manace him so sore smoot
With invisible wounde, ay incurable,
That in his guttes carf it so and boot
That his peynes weren importable.
And certeinly, the wreche was resonable,
For many a mannes guttes dide he peyne;
But from his purpos cursed and dampnable
For al his smert he wolde him nat restreyne;

But bad anon apparaillen his host,
And sodeynly, er he of it was war,
God daunted al his pride and al his bost.
For he so sore fil out of his char,
That it his limes and his skin to-tar,
So that he neither mighte go ne ryde,
But in a chayer men aboute him bar,
Al for-brused, bothe bak and syde.

The wreche of god him smoot so cruelly
That thurgh his body wikked wormes crepte;
And ther-with-al he stank so horribly,
That noon of al his meynee that him kepte,
Whether so he wook or elles slepte,
Ne mighte noght for stink of him endure.
In this meschief he wayled and eek wepte,
And knew god lord of every creature.

To al his host and to him-self also
Ful wlatsom was the stink of his careyne;
No man ne mighte him bere to ne fro.
And in this stink and this horrible peyne
He starf ful wrecchedly in a monteyne.
Thus hath this robbour and this homicyde,
That many a man made to wepe and pleyne,
Swich guerdon as bilongeth unto pryde.

De Alexandro.

The storie of Alisaundre is so comune,
That every wight that hath discrecioun
Hath herd somwhat or al of his fortune.
This wyde world, as in conclusioun,
He wan by strengthe, or for his hye renoun
They weren glad for pees un-to him sende.
The pryde of man and beste he leyde adoun,
Wher-so he cam, un-to the worldes ende.

Comparisoun might never yit be maked
Bitwixe him and another conquerour;
For al this world for drede of him hath quaked,
He was of knighthode and of fredom flour;
Fortune him made the heir of hir honour;
Save wyn and wommen, no-thing mighte aswage
His hye entente in armes and labour;
So was he ful of leonyn corage.

What preys were it to him, though I yow tolde
Of Darius, and an hundred thousand mo,
Of kinges, princes, erles, dukes bolde,
Whiche he conquered, and broghte hem in-to wo?
I seye, as fer as man may ryde or go,
The world was his, what sholde I more devyse?
For though I write or tolde you evermo
Of his knighthode, it mighte nat suffyse.

Twelf yeer he regned, as seith Machabee;
Philippes sone of Macedoyne he was,
That first was king in Grece the contree.
O worthy gentil Alisaundre, allas!
That ever sholde fallen swich a cas!
Empoisoned of thyn owene folk thou were;
Thy *sys* fortune hath turned into *as*,
And yit for thee ne weep she never a tere!

Who shal me yeven teres to compleyne
The deeth of gentillesse and of fraunchyse,
That al the world welded in his demeyne,
And yit him thoughte it mighte nat suffyse?
So ful was his corage of heigh empryse.
Allas! who shal me helpe to endyte
False fortune, and poison to despyse,

The whiche two of al this wo I wyte? 3860

DE IULIO CESARE.

By wisdom, manhede, and by greet labour
Fro humble bed to royal magestee,
Up roos he, Iulius the conquerour,
That wan al thoccident by lond and see,
By strengthe of hond, or elles by tretee, 3865
And un-to Rome made hem tributarie;
And sitthe of Rome the emperour was he,
Til that fortune wex his adversarie.

O mighty Cesar, that in Thessalye 3869
Ageyn Pompeius, fader thyn in lawe,
That of thorient hadde al the chivalrye
As fer as that the day biginneth dawe,
Thou thurgh thy knighthode hast hem take and slawe,
Save fewe folk that with Pompeius fledde,
Thurgh which thou puttest al thorient in awe. 3875
Thanke fortune, that so wel thee spedde!

But now a litel whyl I wol biwaille
This Pompeius, this noble governour
Of Rome, which that fleigh at this bataille; 3879
I seye, oon of his men, a fals traitour,
His heed of smoot, to winnen him favour
Of Iulius, and him the heed he broghte.
Allas, Pompey, of thorient conquerour,
That fortune unto swich a fyn thee broghte!

To Rome ageyn repaireth Iulius 3885
With his triumphe, laureat ful hye,
But on a tyme Brutus Cassius,
That ever hadde of his hye estaat envye,
Ful prively hath maad conspiracye
Ageins this Iulius, in subtil wyse, 3890
And cast the place, in whiche he sholde dye
With boydekins, as I shal yow devyse.

This Iulius to the Capitolie wente
Upon a day, as he was wont to goon,
And in the Capitolie anon him hente 3895
This false Brutus, and his othere foon,
And stikede him with boydekins anoon
With many a wounde, and thus they lete him lye;
But never gronte he at no strook but oon,
Or elles at two, but-if his storie lye. 3900

So manly was this Iulius at herte
And so wel lovede estaatly honestee,
That, though his deedly woundes sore smerte,
His mantel over his hippes casteth he,
For no man sholde seen his privitee. 3905
And, as he lay on deying in traunce,
And wiste verraily that deed was he,
Of honestee yit hadde he remembraunce.

Lucan, to thee this storie I recomende,
And to Sweton, and to Valerie also, 3910
That of this storie wryten word and ende,
How that to thise grete conqueroures two
Fortune was first freend, and sithen fo.
No man ne truste up-on hir favour longe,
But have hir in awayt for ever-mo. 3915
Witnesse on alle thise conqueroures stronge.

CRESUS.

This riche Cresus, whylom king of Lyde,
Of whiche Cresus Cyrus sore him dradde,
Yit was he caught amiddes al his pryde,
And to be brent men to the fyr him ladde. 3920
But swich a reyn doun fro the welkne shadde
That slow the fyr, and made him to escape;
But to be war no grace yet he hadde,
Til fortune on the galwes made him gape.

Whan he escaped was, he can nat stente
For to biginne a newe werre agayn. 3926
He wende wel, for that fortune him sente
Swich hap, that he escaped thurgh the rayn,
That of his foos he mighte nat be slayn;

And eek a sweven up-on a night he mette,
Of which he was so proud and eek so fayn,
That in vengeaunce he al his herte sette.

Up-on a tree he was, as that him thoughte,
Ther Iuppiter him wesh, bothe bak and syde,
And Phebus eek a fair towaille him broughte
To drye him with, and ther-for wex his pryde;
And to his doghter, that stood him bisyde,
Which that he knew in heigh science habounde,
He bad hir telle him what it signifyde,
And she his dreem bigan right thus expounde.

'The tree,' quod she, 'the galwes is to mene,
And Iuppiter bitokneth snow and reyn,
And Phebus, with his towaille so clene,
Tho ben the sonne stremes for to seyn;
Thou shalt anhanged be, fader, certeyn;
Reyn shal thee wasshe, and sonne shal thee drye;'
Thus warned she him ful plat and ful pleyn,
His doughter, which that called was Phanye.

Anhanged was Cresus, the proude king,
His royal trone mighte him nat availle. —
Tragedie is noon other maner thing,
Ne can in singing crye ne biwaille,
But for that fortune alwey wol assaille
With unwar strook the regnes that ben proude;
For when men trusteth hir, than wol she faille,
And covere hir brighte face with a cloude.

Explicit Tragedia.

Here stinteth the Knight the Monk of his Tale.

THE PROLOGUE OF THE NONNE PRESTES TALE.

The prologue of the Nonne Preestes Tale.

'Ho!' quod the knight, 'good sir, na-more of this,
That ye han seyd is right y-nough, y-wis,
And mochel more; for litel hevinesse
Is right y-nough to mochel folk, I gesse.
I seye for me, it is a greet disese
Wher-as men han ben in greet welthe and ese,
To heren of hir sodeyn fal, allas!
And the contrarie is Ioie and greet solas,
As whan a man hath been in povre estaat,
And clymbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,
And ther abydeth in prosperitee,
Swich thing is gladsom, as it thinketh me,
And of swich thing were goodly for to telle.'
'Ye,' quod our hoste, 'by Seint Poules belle,
Ye seye right sooth; this monk, he clappeth loude,
He spak how "fortune covered with a cloude"
I noot never what, and als of a "Tragedie"
Right now ye herde, and parde! no remedie
It is for to biwaille, ne compleyne
That that is doon, and als it is a peyne,
As ye han seyd, to here of hevinesse.
Sir monk, na-more of this, so god yow blesse!
Your tale anoyeth al this companye;
Swich talking is nat worth a boterflye;
For ther-in is ther no desport ne game.

Wherfor, sir Monk, or dan Piers by your name,
I preye yow hertely, telle us somwhat elles,
For sikerly, nere clinking of your belles,
That on your brydel hange on every syde,
By heven king, that for us alle dyde,
I sholde er this han fallen doun for slepe,
Although the slough had never been so depe;
Than had your tale al be told in vayn.
For certeinly, as that thise clerkes seyn,
"Wher-as a man may have noon audience,
Noght helpeth it to tellen his sentence."
And wel I woot the substance is in me,
If any thing shal wel reported be.
Sir, sey somwhat of hunting, I yow preye.'
'Nay,' quod this monk, 'I have no lust to pleye;
Now let another telle, as I have told.'

Than spak our host, with rude speche and bold,
And seyde un-to the Nonnes Preest anon,
'Com neer, thou preest, com hider, thou sir Iohn,
Tel us swich thing as may our hertes glade,
Be blythe, though thou ryde up-on a Iade.
What though thyn hors be bothe foule and lene,
If he wol serve thee, rekke nat a bene;
Look that thyn herte be mery evermo.'
'Vis, sir,' quod he, 'yis, host, so mote I go,
But I be mery, y-wis, I wol be blamed:'—
And right anon his tale he hath atamed,
And thus he seyde un-to us everichon,
This swete preest, this goodly man, sir Iohn.

Explicit.

THE NONNE PREESTES TALE.

Here Biginneth the Nonne Preestes Tale of the Cok and Hen, Chauntecleer and Pertelote.

A POVRE widwe, somdel stape in age,
Was whylom dwelling in a narwe cotage,
Bisyde a grove, stonding in a dale.
This widwe, of which I telle yow my tale,
Sin thilke day that she was last a wyf,
In pacience ladde a ful simple lyf,
For litel was hir catel and hir rente;
By housbondrye, of such as God hir sente,
She fond hir-self, and eek hir doghtren two.
Three large sowes hadde she, and namo,
Three kyn, and eek a sheep that highte Malle.
Ful sooty was hir bour, and eek hir halle,
In which she eet ful many a sclendre meel.
Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a deel.
No deyntee morsel passed thurgh hir throte;
Hir dyete was accordant to hir cote.
Repleccioun ne made hir never syk;
Attempree dyete was al hir phisyk,
And exercyse, and hertes suffisaunce.
The goute lette hir no-thing for to daunce,
Napoplexye shente nat hir heed;
No wyn ne drank she, neither whyt ne reed;
Hir bord was served most with whyt and blak,
Milk and broun breed, in which she fond no lak,
Seynd bacoun, and somtyme an ey or tweye,
For she was as it were a maner deye.

A yerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute
With stikkes, and a drye dich with-oute,
In which she hadde a cok, hight Chauntecleer,
In all the land of crowing nas his peer.
His vois was merier than the mery orgon
On messe-dayes that in the chirche gon;
Wel sikerer was his crowing in his logge,
Than is a clokke, or an abbey orlogge.
By nature knew he ech ascencioun
Of equinoxial in thilke toun;
For whan degrees fiftene were ascended,
Thanne crew he, that it mighte nat ben amended.
His comb was redder than the fyn coral,
And batailed, as it were a castel-wal.
His bile was blak, and as the Ieet it shoon;
Lyk asur were his legges, and his toon;
His nayles whytter than the lilie flour,
And lyk the burned gold was his colour.
This gentil cok hadde in his governaunce
Sevene hennes, for to doon al his plesaunce,
Whiche were his sustres and his paramours,
And wonder lyk to him, as of colours.
Of whiche the faireste hewed on hir throte
Was cleped faire damoysele Pertelote.
Curteys she was, discreet, and debonaire,
And compaignable, and bar hir-self so faire,
Sin thilke day that she was seven night old,
That trewely she hath the herte in hold
Of Chauntecleer loken in every lith;
He loved hir so, that wel was him therwith.
But such a Ioye was it to here hem singe,
Whan that the brighte sonne gan to springe,
In swete accord, 'my lief is faren in londe.'
For thilke tyme, as I have understonde,
Bestes and briddes coude speke and singe.
And so bifel, that in a daweninge,
As Chauntecleer among his wyves alle
Sat on his perche, that was in the halle,
And next him sat this faire Pertelote,
This Chauntecleer gan gronen in his throte,
As man that in his dreem is drecched sore.
And whan that Pertelote thus herde him rore,
She was agast, and seyde, 'O herte dere,
What eyleth yow, to grone in this manere?
Ye been a verray sleper, fy for shame!'
And he answerde and seyde thus, 'madame,
I pray yow, that ye take it nat a-grief:
By god, me mette I was in swich meschief
Right now, that yet myn herte is sore afright.
Now god,' quod he, 'my swevene recche aright,
And keep my body out of foul prisoun!
Me mette, how that I romed up and doun
Withinne our yerde, wher-as I saugh a beste,
Was lyk an hound, and wolde han maad areste
Upon my body, and wolde han had me deed.
His colour was bitwixe yelwe and reed;
And tipped was his tail, and bothe his eres,
With blak, unlyk the remenant of his heres;
His snowte smal, with glowinge eyen tweye.
Yet of his look for fere almost I deye;
This caused me my groning, doutelees.'
'Avoy!' quod she, 'fy on yow, hertelees!
Allas!' quod she, 'for, by that god above,
Now han ye lost myn herte and al my love;
I can nat love a coward, by my feith.
For certes, what so any womman seith,
We alle desyren, if it mighte be,
To han housbondes hardy, wyse, and free,
And secree, and no nigard, ne no fool,
Ne him that is agast of every tool,
Ne noon avauntour, by that god above!

How dorste ye seyn for shame unto your love,
That any thing mighte make yow aferd?
Have ye no mannes herte, and han a berd?
Allas! and conne ye been agast of swevenis?
No-thing, god wot, but vanitee, in sweven is.
Swevenes engendren of repleccioun,
And ofte of fume, and of complecciouns,
Whan humours been to habundant in a wight.
Certes this dreem, which ye han met to-night,
Cometh of the grete superfluitee
Of youre rede *colera*, pardee,
Which causeth folk to dreden in here dremes
Of arwes, and of fyr with rede lemes,
Of grete bestes, that they wol hem byte,
Of contek, and of whelpes grete and lyte;
Right as the humour of malencolye
Causeth ful many a man, in sleep, to crye,
For fere of blake beres, or boles blake,
Or elles, blake develes wole hem take.
Of othere humours coude I telle also,
That werken many a man in sleep ful wo;
But I wol passe as lightly as I can.
Lo Catoun, which that was so wys a man,
Seyde he nat thus, ne do no fors of dremes?
Now, sire,' quod she, 'whan we flee fro the bemes,
For Goddes love, as tak som laxatyf;
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,
I counseille yow the beste, I wol nat lye,
That bothe of colere and of malencolye
Ye purge yow; and for ye shul nat tarie,
Though in this toun is noon apotecarie,
I shal my-self to herbes techen yow,
That shul ben for your hele, and for your prow;
And in our yerd tho herbes shal I finde,
The whiche han of hir propretee, by kinde,
To purgen yow binethe, and eek above.
Forget not this, for goddes owene love!
Ye been ful colerik of complecioun.
Ware the sonne in his ascencioun
Ne fynde yow nat repleet of humours hote;
And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote,
That ye shul have a fevere terciane,
Or an agu, that may be youre bane.
A day or two ye shul have digestyves
Of wormes, er ye take your laxatyves,
Of lauriol, centaure, and fumetere,
Or elles of ellebor, that groweth there,
Of catapuce, or of gaytres beryis,
Of erbe yve, growing in our yerd, that mery is;
Pekke hem up right as they growe, and ete hem in.
Be mery, housbond, for your fader kin!
Dredeth no dreem; I can say yow namore.'
'Madame,' quod he, '*graunt mercy* of your lore.
But nathelees, as touching daun Catoun,
That hath of wisdom such a greet renoun,
Though that he bad no dremes for to drede.
By god, men may in olde bokes rede
Of many a man, more of auctoritee
Than ever Catoun was, so mote I thee,
Than al the revers seyn of his sentence,
And han wel founden by experience,
That dremes ben significaciouns,
As wel of Ioye as tribulaciouns
That folk enduren in this lyf present.
Ther needeth make of this noon argument;
The verray preve sheweth it in dede.
Oon of the gretteste auctours that men rede
Seith thus, that whylom two felawes wente
On pilgrimage, in a ful good entente;
And happed so, thay come into a toun,
Wher-as ther was swich congregacioun
Of peple, and eek so streit of herbergage,
That they ne founde as muche as o cotage,
In which they bothe mighte y-logged be.
Wherfor thay mosten, of necessitee,
As for that night, departen compaignye;
And ech of hem goth to his hostelrye,
And took his logging as it wolde falle.
That oon of hem was logged in a stalle,
Fer in a yerd, with oxen of the plough;

That other man was logged wel y-nough,
As was his aventure, or his fortune,
That us governeth alle as in commune.
And so bifel, that, longe er it were day,
This man mette in his bed, ther-as he lay,
How that his felawe gan up-on him calle,
And seyde, 'allas! for in an oxes stalle
This night I shal be mordred ther I lye.
Now help me, dere brother, er I dye;
In alle haste com to me,' he sayde.
This man out of his sleep for fere abrayde;
But whan that he was wakned of his sleep,
He turned him, and took of this no keep;
Him thoughte his dreem nas but a vanitee.
Thus twyës in his sleping dremed he.
And atte thridde tyme yet his felawe
Cam, as him thoughte, and seide, 'I am now slawe;
Bihold my blody woundes, depe and wyde!
Arys up erly in the morwe-tyde,
And at the west gate of the toun,' quod he,
'A carte ful of donge ther shaltow see,
In which my body is hid ful prively;
Do thilke carte aresten boldely.
My gold caused my mordre, sooth to sayn;'
And tolde him every poynt how he was slayn,
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.
And truste wel, his dreem he fond ful trewe;
For on the morwe, as sone as it was day,
To his felawes in he took the way;
And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,
After his felawe he bigan to calle.
The hostiler answered him anon,
And seyde, 'sire, your felawe is agon,
As sone as day he wente out of the toun.'
This man gan fallen in suspecioun,
Remembring on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he goth, no lenger wolde he lette,
Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond
A dong-carte, as it were to donge lond,
That was arrayed in the same wyse
As ye han herd the dede man devyse;
And with an hardy herte he gan to crye
Vengeaunce and Iustice of this felonye:—
'My felawe mordred is this same night,
And in this carte he lyth gapinge upright.
I crye out on the ministres,' quod he,
'That sholden kepe and reulen this citee;
Harrow! allas! her lyth my felawe slayn!'
What sholde I more un-to this tale sayn?
The peple out-sterte, and caste the cart to grounde,
And in the middel of the dong they founde
The dede man, that mordred was al newe.
O blisful god, that art so Iust and trewe!
Lo, how that thou biwreyest mordre alway!
Mordre wol out, that see we day by day.
Mordre is so wlatsom and abhominable
To god, that is so Iust and resonable,
That he ne wol nat suffre it heled be;
Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or three,
Mordre wol out, this my conclusioun.
And right anoon, ministres of that toun
Han hent the carter, and so sore him pyned,
And eek the hostiler so sore engyned,
That thay biknewe hir wikkednesse anoon,
And were an-hanged by the nekke-boon.
Here may men seen that dremes been to drede.
And certes, in the same book I rede,
Right in the nexte chapitre after this,
(I gabbe nat, so have I Ioye or blis,)
Two men that wolde han passed over see,
For certeyn cause, in-to a fer contree,
If that the wind ne hadde been contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to tarie,
That stood ful mery upon an haven-syde.
But on a day, agayn the even-tyde,
The wind gan chaunge, and blew right as hem leste.
Iolif and glad they wente un-to hir reste,
And casten hem ful erly for to saille;
But to that oo man fil a greet mervaille.
That oon of hem, in sleping as he lay,
Him mette a wonder dreem, agayn the day;

Him thoughte a man stood by his beddes syde,
And him comaunded, that he sholde abyde,
And seyde him thus, 'if thou to-morwe wende,
Thou shalt be dreynt; my tale is at an ende.'
He wook, and tolde his felawe what he mette,
And preyde him his viage for to lette;
As for that day, he preyde him to abyde.
His felawe, that lay by his beddes syde,
Gan for to laughe, and scorned him ful faste.
'No dreem,' quod he, 'may so myn herte agaste,
That I wol lette for to do my thinges.
I sette not a straw by thy dreminges,
For swevenes been but vanitees and lapes.
Men dreme al-day of owles or of apes,
And eke of many a mase therwithal;
Men dreme of thing that nevere was ne shal.
But sith I see that thou wolt heer abyde,
And thus for-sleuthen wilfully thy tyde,
God wot it reweth me; and have good day.'
And thus he took his leve, and wente his way.
But er that he hadde halfe his cours y-seyled,
Noot I nat why, ne what mischaunce it eyled,
But casuelly the shippes botme rente,
And ship and man under the water wente
In sighte of othere shippes it byside,
That with hem seyled at the same tyde.
And therfor, faire Pertelote so dere,
By swiche ensamples olde maistow lere,
That no man sholde been to recchelees
Of dremes, for I sey thee, doutelees,
That many a dreem ful sore is for to drede.
Lo, in the lyf of seint Kenelm, I rede,
That was Kenulphus sone, the noble king
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thing;
A lyte er he was mordred, on a day,
His mordre in his avisioun he say.

His norice him expounded every del
His sweven, and bad him for to kepe him wel
For traisoun; but he nas but seven yeer old,
And therfore litel tale hath he told
Of any dreem, so holy was his herte.
By god, I hadde lever than my sherte
That ye had rad his legende, as have I.
Dame Pertelote, I sey yow trewely,
Macrobeus, that writ the avisioun
In Affrike of the worthy Cipioun,
Affermeth dremes, and seith that they been
Warning of thinges that men after seen.
And forther-more, I pray yow loketh wel
In the olde testament, of Daniel,
If he held dremes any vanitee.
Reed eek of Ioseph, and ther shul ye see
Wher dremes ben somtyme (I sey nat alle)
Warning of thinges that shul after falle.
Loke of Egipt the king, daun Pharao,
His bakere and his boteler also,
Wher they ne felte noon effect in dremes.
Who-so wol seken actes of sondry remes,
May rede of dremes many a wonder thing.
Lo Cresus, which that was of Lyde king,
Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,
Which signified he sholde anhanged be?
Lo heer Andromacha, Ectores wyf,
That day that Ector sholde lese his lyf,
She dremed on the same night biforn,
How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn,
If thilke day he wente in-to bataille;
She warned him, but it mighte nat availle;
He wente for to fighte nathelees,
But he was slayn anoon of Achilles.
But thilke tale is al to long to telle,
And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle.
Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun,
That I shal han of this avisioun
Adversitee; and I seye forther-more,
That I ne telle of laxatyves no store,
For they ben venimous, I woot it wel;
I hem defye, I love hem never a del.

Now let us speke of mirthe, and stinte al this;
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,
Of o thing god hath sent me large grace;
For whan I see the beautee of your face,
Ye ben so scarlet-reed about your yën,
It maketh al my drede for to dyen;
For, also siker as *In principio*,
Mulier est hominis confusio;
Madame, the sentence of this Latin is —
Womman is mannes Ioye and al his blis.
For whan I fele a-night your softe syde,
Al-be-it that I may nat on you ryde,
For that our perche is maad so narwe, alas!
I am so ful of Ioye and of solas
That I defye bothe sweven and dreem.'
And with that word he fley doun fro the beem,
For it was day, and eek his hennes alle;
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he had founde a corn, lay in the yerd.
Royal he was, he was namore aferd;
He fethered Pertelote twenty tyme,
And trad as ofte, er that it was pryme.
He loketh as it were a grim leoun;
And on his toos he rometh up and doun,
Him deyned not to sette his foot to grounde.
He chukketh, whan he hath a corn y-founde,
And to him rennen thanne his wyves alle.
Thus royal, as a prince is in his halle,
Leve I this Chauntecleer in his pasture;
And after wol I telle his aventure.
Whan that the month in which the world bigan,
That highte March, whan god first maked man,
Was complet, and [y]-passed were also,
Sin March bigan, thritty dayes and two,
Bifel thar Chauntecleer, in al his pryde,
His seven wyves walking by his syde,
Caste up his eyen to the brighte sonne,
That in the signe of Taurus hadde y-ronne
Twenty degrees and oon, and somwhat more;
And knew by kynde, and by noon other lore,
That it was pryme, and crew with blisful stevene.
'The sonne,' he sayde, 'is clomben up on hevene
Fourty degrees and oon, and more, y-wis.
Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis,
Herkneth thise blisful briddes how they singe,
And see the fresshe floures how they springe;
Ful is myn herte of revel and solas.'
But sodeinly him fil a sorweful cas;
For ever the latter ende of Ioye is wo.
God woot that worldly Ioye is sone ago;
And if a rethor coude faire endyte,
He in a cronique saufly mighte it wryte,
As for a sovereyn notabilitee.
Now every wys man, lat him herkne me;
This storie is al-so trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot de Lake,
That wommen holde in ful gret reverence.
Now wol I torne agayn to my sentence.
A col-fox, ful of sly iniquitee,
That in the grove hadde woned yeres three,
By heigh imaginacioun forn-cast,
The same night thrugh-out the hegges brast
Into the yerd, ther Chauntecleer the faire
Was wont, and eek his wyves, to repaire;
And in a bed of wortes stille he lay,
Til it was passed undern of the day,
Wayting his tyme on Chauntecleer to falle,
As gladly doon thise homicydes alle,
That in awayt liggen to mordre men.
O false mordrer, lurking in thy den!
O newe Scariot, newe Genilon!
False dissimilour, O Greek Sinon,
That broghtest Troye al outrely to sorwe!
O Chauntecleer, acursed be that morwe,
That thou into that yerd flough fro the bemes!
Thou were ful wel y-warned by thy dremes,
That thilke day was perilous to thee.
But what that god forwoot mot nedes be,
After the opinioun of certeyn clerkis.
Witnesse on him, that any perfit clerk is,

That in scole is gret altercacioun
In this matere, and greet disputisoun,
And hath ben of an hundred thousand men.
But I ne can not bulte it to the bren,
As can the holy doctour Augustyn,
Or Boece, or the bishop Bradwardyn,
Whether that goddes worthy forwriting
Streyneth me nedely for to doon a thing,
(Nedely clepe I simple necessitee);
Or elles, if free choys be graunted me
To do that same thing, or do it noght,
Though god forwoot it, er that it was wroght;
Or if his witing streyneth nevere a del
But by necessitee condicionel.
I wol not han to do of swich matere;
My tale is of a cok, as ye may here,
That took his counseil of his wyf, with sorwe,
To walken in the yerd upon that morwe
That he had met the dreem, that I yow telde.
Wommennes counseils been ful ofte colde;
Wommannes counseil broghte us first to wo,
And made Adam fro paradys to go,
Ther-as he was ful mery, and wel at ese.
But for I noot, to whom it mighte displese,
If I counseil of wommen wolde blame,
Passe over, for I seyde it in my game.
Rede auctours, wher they trete of swich matere,
And what thay seyn of wommen ye may here.
Thise been the cokkes wordes, and nat myne;
I can noon harm of no womman divyne.
Faire in the sond, to bathe hir merily,
Lyth Pertelote, and alle hir sustres by,
Agayn the sonne; and Chauntecleer so free
Song merier than the mermayde in the see;
For Phisiologus seith sikerly,
How that they singen wel and merily.
And so bifel that, as he caste his yë,
Among the wortes, on a boterflye,
He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.
No-thing ne liste him thanne for to crowe,
But cryde anon, 'cok, cok,' and up he sterte,
As man that was affrayed in his herte.
For naturelly a beest desyreth flee
Fro his contrarie, if he may it see,
Though he never erst had seyn it with his yë.
This Chauntecleer, whan he gan him espye,
He wolde han fled, but that the fox anon
Seyde, 'Gentil sire, allas! wher wol ye gon?
Be ye affrayed of me that am your freend?
Now certes, I were worse than a feend,
If I to yow wolde harm or vileinye.
I am nat come your counseil for tespye;
But trewely, the cause of my cominge
Was only for to herkne how that ye singe.
For trewely ye have as mery a stevene
As eny aungel hath, that is in hevene;
Therwith ye han in musik more felinge
Than hadde Boece, or any that can singe.
My lord your fader (god his soule blesse!)
And eek your moder, of hir gentilesse,
Han in myn hous y-been, to my gret ese;
And certes, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow plese.
But for men speke of singing, I wol saye,
So mote I brouke wel myn eyen tweye,
Save yow, I herde never man so singe,
As dide your fader in the morweninge;
Certes, it was of herte, al that he song.
And for to make his voys the more strong,
He wolde so peyne him, that with bothe his yën
He moste winke, so loude he wolde cryen,
And stonden on his tiptoon ther-with-al,
And strecche forth his nekke long and smal.
And eek he was of swich discrecioun,
That ther nas no man in no regioun
That him in song or wisdom mighte passe.
I have wel rad in daun Burnel the Asse,
Among his vers, how that ther was a cok,
For that a preestes sone yaf him a knok

Upon his leg, whyl he was yong and nyce,
He made him for to lese his benefyce.
But certeyn, ther nis no comparisoun
Bitwix the wisdom and discrecioun
Of youre fader, and of his subtiltee.
Now singeth, sire, for seinte Charitee,
Let see, conne ye your fader countrefete?'
This Chauntecleer his winges gan to bete,
As man that coude his tresoun nat espye,
So was he ravisshed with his flaterye.
Allas! ye lordes, many a fals flatour
Is in your courtes, and many a losengeour,
That plesen yow wel more, by my feith,
Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow seith.
Redeth Ecclesiaste of flaterye;
Beth war, ye lordes, of hir trecherye.
This Chauntecleer stood hye up-on his toos,
Strecching his nekke, and heeld his eyen cloos,
And gan to crowe loude for the nones;
And daun Russel the fox sterte up at ones,
And by the gargat hente Chauntecleer,
And on his bak toward the wode him beer,
For yet ne was ther no man that him sewed.
O destinee, that mayst nat been eschewed!
Allas, that Chauntecleer fleigh fro the bemes!
Allas, his wyf ne roghte nat of dremes!
And on a Friday fil al this meschaunce.
O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce,
Sin that thy servant was this Chauntecleer,
And in thy service dide al his poweer,
More for delyt, than world to multiplye,
Why woldestow suffre him on thy day to dye?
O Gaufred, dere mayster soverayn,
That, whan thy worthy king Richard was slayn
With shot, compleynedest his deth so sore,
Why ne hadde I now thy sentence and thy lore,
The Friday for to chyde, as diden ye?
(For on a Friday soothly slayn was he.)
Than wolde I shewe yow how that I coude pleyne
For Chauntecleres drede, and for his peyne.
Certes, swich cry ne lamentacioun
Was never of ladies maad, whan Ilioun
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite swerd,
Whan he hadde hent king Priam by the berd,
And slayn him (as saith us *Eneyaos*),
As maden alle the hennes in the clos,
Whan they had seyn of Chauntecleer the sighte.
But sovereynly dame Pertelote shrighte,
Ful louder than dide Hasdrubales wyf,
Whan that hir housbond hadde lost his lyf,
And that the Romayns hadde brend Cartage;
She was so ful of torment and of rage,
That wilfully into the fyr she sterte,
And brende hir-selven with a stedfast herte.
O woful hennes, right so cryden ye,
As, whan that Nero brende the citee
Of Rome, cryden senatoures wyves,
For that hir housbondes losten alle hir lyves;
Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn.
Now wol I torne to my tale agayn: —
This sely widwe, and eek hir doghtres two,
Herden thise hennes crye and maken wo,
And out at dores sterten they anoon,
And syen the fox toward the grove goon,
And bar upon his bak the cok away;
And cryden, 'Out! harrow! and weylaway!
Ha, ha, the fox!' and after him they ran,
And eek with staves many another man;
Ran Colle our dogge, and Talbot, and Gerland,
And Malkin, with a distaf in hir hand;
Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray hogges
So were they fered for berking of the dogges

And shouting of the men and wimmen eke,
They ronne so, hem thoughte hir herte breke.
They yelleden as feendes doon in helle;
The dokes cryden as men wolde hem quelle; 4580
The gees for fere flowen over the trees;
Out of the hyve cam the swarm of bees;
So hidous was the noyse, a! *benedicite!*
Certes, he Iakke Straw, and his meynee,
Ne made never shoutes half so shrille,
Whan that they wolden any Fleming kille, 4586
As thilke day was maad upon the fox.
Of bras thay broghten bemes, and of box,
Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blewe and pouped,
And therwithal thay shryked and they houped; 4590
It semed as that heven sholde falle.
Now, gode men, I pray yow herkneth alle!
Lo, how fortune turneth sodeinly
The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy!
This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak,
In al his drede, un-to the fox he spak, 4596
And seyde, 'sire, if that I were as ye,
Yet sholde I seyn (as wis god helpe me),
Turneth agayn, ye proude cherles alle!
A verray pestilence up-on yow falle! 4600
Now am I come un-to this wodes syde,
Maugree your heed, the cok shal heer abyde;
I wol him ete in feith, and that anon.'—
The fox answerde, 'in feith, it shal be don,'—
And as he spak that word, al sodeinly
This cok brak from his mouth deliverly, 4606
And heighe up-on a tree he fleigh anon.
And whan the fox saugh that he was y-gon,
'Allas!' quod he, 'O Chauntecleer, allas!
I have to yow,' quod he, 'y-doon trespas, 4610
In-as-muche as I maked yow aferd,
Whan I yow hente, and broghte out of the yerd;
But, sire, I dide it in no wikke entente;
Com doun, and I shal telle yow what I mente.
I shal seye sooth to yow, god help me so.' 4615
'Nay than,' quod he, 'I shrewe us bothe two,
And first I shrewe my-self, bothe blood and bones,
If thou bigyle me ofter than ones.
Thou shalt na-more, thurgh thy flaterye,
Do me to singe and winke with myn yë.
For he that winketh, whan he sholde see, 4621
Al wilfully, god lat him never thee!'
'Na,' quod the fox, 'but god yeve him meschaunce,
That is so undiscreet of governaunce,
That Iangleth whan he sholde holde his pees.' 4625
Lo, swich it is for to be reccheles,
And necligent, and truste on flaterye.
But ye that holden this tale a folye,
As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,
Taketh the moralitee, good men. 4630
For seint Paul seith, that al that writen is,
To our doctryne it is y-write, y-wis.
Taketh the fruyt, and let the chaf be stille.
Now, gode god, if that it be thy wille,
As seith my lord, so make us alle good men; 4635
And bringe us to his heighe blisse. Amen.

Here is ended the Nonne Preestes Tale.

EPILOGUE TO THE NONNE PREESTES TALE.

'Sir Nonnes Preest,' our hoste seyde anoon,
'Y-blessed be thy breche, and every stoon!
This was a mery tale of Chauntecleer.
But, by my trouthe, if thou were secu-ler,
Thou woldest been a trede-foul a-right
For, if thou have corage as thou hast might,
Thee were nede of hennes, as I wene,
Ya, mo than seven tymes seventene.
See, whiche braunes hath this gentil Preest,
So greet a nekke, and swich a large breest!
He loketh as a sperhauk with his yen;
Him nedeth nat his colour for to dyen
With brasil, ne with greyn of Portin-gale.
Now sire, faire falle yow for youre tale!'
And after that he, with ful mery chere,
Seide to another, as ye shullen here.

GROUP C.

THE PHISICIENS TALE.

Here folweth the Phisiciens Tale.

Ther was, as telleth Titus Livius,
A knight that called was Virginius,
Fulfild of honour and of worthinesse,
And strong of freendes and of greet richesse.
This knight a doghter hadde by his wyf,
No children hadde he mo in al his lyf.
Fair was this mayde in excellent beautee
Aboven every wight that man may see;
For nature hath with sovereyn diligence
Y-formed hir in so greet excellence,
As though she wolde seyn, 'lo! I, Na-ture,
Thus can I forme and peynte a creature,
Whan that me list; who can me countre-fete?
Pigmalion noght, though he ay forge and bete,
Or grave, or peynte; for I dar wel seyn,
Apelles, Zanzis, sholde werche in veyn,
Outher to grave or peynte or forge or bete,
If they presumed me to countrefete.
For he that is the former principal
Hath maked me his vicaire general,
To forme and peynten erthely creaturis
Right as me list, and ech thing in my cure is
Under the mone, that may wane and waxe,
And for my werk right no-thing wol I axe;
My lord and I ben ful of oon accord;
I made hir to the worship of my lord.
So do I alle myne othere creatures,
What colour that they han, or what figures.'—
Thus semeth me that Nature wolde seye.
This mayde of age twelf yeer was and tweye,
In which that Nature hadde swich delyt.
For right as she can peynte a lilie whyt
And reed a rose, right with swich peyn-ture
She peynted hath this noble creature
Er she were born, up-on hir limes free,
Wher-as by right swiche colours sholde be;
And Phebus dyed hath hir tresses grete
Lyk to the stremes of his burned hete.
And if that excellent was hir beautee,
A thousand-fold more vertuous was she.
In hir ne lakked no condicioun,
That is to preyse, as by discrecioun.

As wel in goost as body chast was she;
For which she floured in virginitee
With alle humilitee and abstinence,
With alle attemperaunce and pacience,
With mesure eek of bering and array.
Discreet she was in answering alway;
Though she were wys as Pallas, dar I seyn,
Hir facound eek ful wommanly and pleyn,
No countrefeted termes hadde she
To seme wys; but after hir degree
She spak, and alle hir wordes more and lesse
Souninge in vertu and in gentillesse.
Shamfast she was in maydens shamfastnesse,
Constant in herte, and ever in bisinesse
To dryve hir out of ydel slogardye.
Bacus hadde of hir mouth right no maistrye;
For wyn and youthe doon Venus encrece,
As men in fyr wol casten oile or grece.
And of hir owene vertu, unconstreyned,
She hath ful ofte tyme syk hir feyned,
For that she wolde fleen the companye
Wher lykly was to treten of folye,
As is at festes, revels, and at daunces,
That been occasions of daliaunces.
Swich thinges maken children for to be
To sone rype and bold, as men may see,
Which is ful perilous, and hath ben yore.
For al to sone may she lerne lore
Of boldnesse, whan she woxen is a wyf.
And ye maistresses in your olde lyf,
That lordes doghtres han in governaunce,
Ne taketh of my wordes no displesaunce;
Thenketh that ye ben set in governinges
Of lordes doghters, only for two thinges;
Outher for ye han kept your honestee,
Or elles ye han falle in freletee,
And knowen wel y-nough the olde daunce,
And han forsaken fully swich meschaunce
For evermo; therfore, for Cristes sake,
To teche hem vertu loke that ye ne slake.
A theef of venisoun, that hath forlaft
His likerousnesse, and al his olde craft,
Can kepe a forest best of any man.
Now kepeth hem wel, for if ye wol, ye can;
Loke wel that ye un-to no vice assente,
Lest ye be dampned for your wikke entente;
For who-so doth, a traitour is certeyn.
And taketh kepe of that that I shal seyn;
Of alle tresons sovereyn pestilence
Is whan a wight bitrayseth innocence.
Ye fadres and ye modres eek also,
Though ye han children, be it oon or two,
Your is the charge of al hir surveyaunce,
Whyl that they been under your governaunce.
Beth war that by ensample of your livinge,
Or by your necligence in chastisinge,
That they ne perisse; for I dar wel seye,
If that they doon, ye shul it dere abeye.
Under a shepherde softe and necligent
The wolf hath many a sheep and lamb to-rent.
Suffyseth oon ensample now as here,
For I mot turne agayn to my matere.
This mayde, of which I wol this tale expresse,
So kepte hir-self, hir neded no maistresse;
For in hir living maydens mighten rede,
As in a book, every good word or dede,
That longeth to a mayden vertuous;
She was so prudent and so bountevous.
For which the fame out-sprong on every syde
Bothe of hir beautee and hir bountee wyde;
That thurgh that land they preysed hir echone,
That loved vertu, save envye allone,
That sory is of other mennes wele,
And glad is of his sorwe and his unhele;
(The doctour maketh this descripcioun).
This mayde up-on a day wente in the toun
Toward a temple, with hir moder dere,
As is of yonge maydens the manere.
Now was ther thanne a Iustice in that toun,
That governour was of that regioun.

And so bifel, this Iuge his eyen caste
Up-on this mayde, avysinge him ful faste,
As she cam forby ther this Iuge stood.
Anon his herte chaunged and his mood,
So was he caught with beautee of this mayde;
And to him-self ful prively he sayde,
'This mayde shal be myn, for any man.'
Anon the feend in-to his herte ran,
And taughte him sodeynly, that he by slighte
The mayden to his purpos winne mighte.
For certes, by no force, ne by no mede,
Him thoughte, he was nat able for to spede;
For she was strong of freendes, and eek she
Confermed was in swich soverayn bountee,
That wel he wiste he mighte hir never winne
As for to make hir with hir body sinne.
For which, by greet deliberacioun,
He sente after a cherl, was in the toun,
Which that he knew for subtil and for bold.
This Iuge un-to this cherl his tale hath told
In secree wyse, and made him to ensure,
He sholde telle it to no creature,
And if he dide, he sholde lese his heed.
Whan that assented was this cursed reed,
Glad was this Iuge and maked him greet chere,
And yaf hym yiftes preciouse and dere.
Whan shapen was al hir conspiracye
Fro point to point, how that his lecherye
Parfourned sholde been ful subtilly,
As ye shul here it after openly,
Hoom gooth the cherl, that highte Claudius.
This false Iuge that highte Apius,
So was his name, (for this is no fable,
But knowen for historial thing notable,
The sentence of it sooth is, out of doute),
This false Iuge gooth now faste aboute
To hasten his delyt al that he may.
And so bifel sone after, on a day,
This false Iuge, as telleth us the storie,
As he was wont, sat in his consistorie,
And yaf his domes up-on sondry cas.
This false cherl cam forth a ful greet pas,
And seyde, 'lord, if that it be your wille,
As dooth me right up-on this pitous bille,
In which I pleyne up-on Virginius.
And if that he wol seyn it is nat thus,
I wol it preve, and finde good witnesse,
That sooth is that my bille wol expresse.'
The Iuge answerde, 'of this, in his absence,
I may nat yeve diffinitif sentence.
Lat do him calle, and I wol gladly here;
Thou shalt have al right, and no wrong here.'
Virginius cam, to wite the Iuges wille,
And right anon was rad this cursed bille;
The sentence of it was as ye shul here.
'To yow, my lord, sire Apius so dere,
Sheweth your povre servant Claudius,
How that a knight, called Virginius,
Agayns the lawe, agayn al equitee,
Holdeth, expres agayn the wil of me,
My servant, which that is my thral by right,
Which fro myn hous was stole up-on a night,
Whyl that she was ful yong; this wol I preve
By witnesse, lord, so that it nat yow greve.
She nis his doghter nat, what so he seye;
Wherfore to yow, my lord the Iuge, I preye,
Yeld me my thral, if that it be your wille.'
Lo! this was al the sentence of his bille.
Virginius gan up-on the cherl biholde,
But hastily, er he his tale tolde,
And wolde have preved it, as sholde a knight,
And eek by witnessing of many a wight,
That it was fals that seyde his adversarie,
This cursed Iuge wolde no-thing tarie,
Ne here a word more of Virginius,
But yaf his Iugement, and seyde thus:—
'I deme anon this cherl his servant have;
Thou shalt no lenger in thyn hous hir save.
Go bring hir forth, and put hir in our warde,

The cherl shal have his thral, this I awarde.'
And whan this worthy knight Virginius,
Thurgh sentence of this Iustice Apius,
Moste by force his dere doghter yiven
Un-to the Iuge, in lecherye to liven,
He gooth him hoom, and sette him in his halle,
And leet anon his dere doghter calle,
And, with a face deed as asshen colde,
Upon hir humble face he gan biholde,
With fadres pitee stiking thurgh his herte,
Al wolde he from his purpos nat converte.
'Doghter,' quod he, 'Virginia, by thy name,
Ther been two weyes, outher deeth or shame,
That thou most suffre; allas! that I was bore!
For never thou deservedest wherfore
To dyen with a swerd or with a knyf.
O dere doghter, ender of my lyf,
Which I have fostred up with swich plesaunce,
That thou were never out of my remembraunce!
O doghter, which that art my laste wo,
And in my lyf my laste Ioye also,
O gemme of chastitee, in pacience
Take thou thy deeth, for this is my sentence.
For love and nat for hate, thou most be deed;
My pitous hand mot smyten of thyn heed.
Allas! that ever Apius thee say!
Thus hath he falsly Iuged thee to-day'—
And tolde hir al the cas, as ye bifore
Han herd; nat nedeth for to telle it more.
'O mercy, dere fader,' quod this mayde,
And with that word she both hir armes layde
About his nekke, as she was wont to do:
The teres broste out of hir eyen two,
And seyde, 'gode fader, shal I dye? 235
Is ther no grace? is ther no remedye?'
'No, certes, dere doghter myn,' quod he.
'Thanne yif me leyser, fader myn,' quod she,
'My deeth for to compleyne a litel space;
For pardee, Iepte yaf his doghter grace
For to compleyne, er he hir slow, allas!
And god it woot, no-thing was his trespas,
But for she ran hir fader first to see,
To welcome him with greet solempnitee.'
And with that word she fil aswowne anon,
And after, whan hir swowning is agon,
She ryseth up, and to hir fader sayde,
'Blessed be god, that I shal dye a mayde.
Yif me my deeth, er that I have a shame;
Doth with your child your wil, a goddes name!'
And with that word she preyed him ful ofte,
That with his swerd he wolde smyte softe,
And with that word aswowne doun she fil.
Hir fader, with ful sorweful herte and wil,
Hir heed of smoot, and by the top it hente,
And to the Iuge he gan it to presente,
As he sat yet in doom in consistorie.
And whan the Iuge it saugh, as seith the storie,
He bad to take him and anhange him faste.
But right anon a thousand peple in thraste,
To save the knight, for routhe and for pitee,
For knowen was the false iniquitee.
The peple anon hath suspect of this thing,
By manere of the cherles chalanging,
That it was by the assent of Apius;
They wisten wel that he was lecherous.
For which un-to this Apius they gon,
And caste him in a prison right anon,
Wher-as he slow him-self; and Claudius,
That servant was un-to this Apius,
Was demed for to hange upon a tree;
But that Virginius, of his pitee,
So preyde for him that he was exyled;
And elles, certes, he had been bigyled.
The remenent were anhanged, more and lesse,

That were consentant of this cursedness.—
Heer men may seen how sinne hath his meryte!
Beth war, for no man woot whom god wol smyte
In no degree, ne in which maner wyse
The worm of conscience may agryse
Of wikked lyf, though it so privee be,
That no man woot ther-of but god and he.
For be he lewed man, or elles lered,
He noot how sone that he shal been afered.
Therfore I rede yow this conseil take,
Forsaketh sinne, er sinne yow forsake.

Here endeth the Phisiciens tale.

WORDS OF THE HOST.

The wordes of the Host to the Phisicien and the Pardoner.

Our Hoste gan to swere as he were wood,
'Harrow!' quod he, 'by nayles and by blood!
This was a fals cherl and a fals Iustyse!
As shamful deeth as herte may devyse
Come to thise Iuges and hir advocas!
Algate this sely mayde is slayn, allas!
Allas! to dere boghte she beautee!
Wherfore I seye al day, as men may see,
That yiftes of fortune or of nature
Ben cause of deeth to many a creature.
Hir beautee was hir deeth, I dar wel sayn;
Allas! so pitously as she was slayn!
Of bothe yiftes that I speke of now
Men han ful ofte more harm than prow.
But trewely, myn owene mayster dere,
This is a pitous tale for to here.
But natheles, passe over, is no fors;
I prey to god, so save thy gentil cors,
And eek thyne urinals and thy Iordanes,
Thyn Ypocras, and eek thy Galianes,
And every boist ful of thy letuarie;
God blesse hem, and our lady seinte Marie!
So mot I theen, thou art a propre man,
And lyk a prelat, by seint Ronyan!
Seyde I nat wel? I can nat speke in terme;
But wel I woot, thou doost my herte to erme,
That I almost have caught a cardiacle.
By corpus bones! but I have triacle,
Or elles a draught of moyste and corny ale,
Or but I here anon a mery tale,
Myn herte is lost for pitee of this mayde.
Thou bel amy, thou Pardoner,' he seyde,
'Tel us som mirthe or Iapes right anon.'
'It shall be doon,' quod he, 'by seint Ronyon!
But first,' quod he, 'heer at this alestake
I wol both drinke, and eten of a cake.'
But right anon thise gentils gonne to crye,
'Nay! lat him telle us of no ribaudye;
Tel us som moral thing, that we may lere
Som wit, and thanne wol we gladly here.'
'I graunte, y-wis,' quod he, 'but I mot thinke
Up-on som honest thing, whyl that I drinke.'

THE PROLOGUE OF THE PARDONERS TALE.

Here folweth the Prologe of the Pardoners Tale.

Radix malorum est Cupiditas: Ad Thimotheum, sexto.

'LORDINGS,' quod he, 'in chirches whan I preche,
I peyne me to han an hauteyn speche,
And ringe it out as round as gooth a belle,
For I can al by rote that I telle.
My theme is alwey oon, and ever was—
"*Radix malorum est Cupiditas.*"
First I pronounce whennes that I come,
And than my bulles shewe I, alle and somme.
Our lige lordes seel on my patente,
That shewe I first, my body to warente,
That no man be so bold, ne preest ne clerk,
Me to destourbe of Cristes holy werk;
And after that than telle I forth my tales,
Bulles of popes and of cardinales,
Of patriarkes, and bishoppes I shewe;
And in Latyn I speke a wordes fewe,
To saffron with my predicacioun,
And for to stire men to devocioun.
Than shewe I forth my longe cristal stones,
Y-crammed ful of cloutes and of bones;
Reliks been they, as wenen they echoon.
Than have I in latoun a sholder-boon
Which that was of an holy Iewes shepe.
"Good men," seye I, "tak of my wordes kepe;
If that this boon be wasshe in any welle,
If cow, or calf, or sheep, or oxe swelle
That any worm hath ete, or worm y-stonge,
Tak water of that welle, and wash his tonge,
And it is hool anon; and forthermore,
Of pokkes and of scabbe, and every sore
Shal every sheep be hool, that of this welle
Drinketh a draughte; tak kepe eek what I telle
If that the good-man, that the bestes oweth,
Wol every wike, er that the cok him croweth,
Fastinge, drinken of this welle a draughte,
As thilke holy Iewe our eldres taughte,
His bestes and his stoor shal multiplye.
And, sirs, also it heleth Ialousye;
For, though a man be falle in Ialous rage,
Let maken with this water his potage,
And never shal he more his wyf mistriste,
Though he the sooth of hir defaute wiste;
Al had she taken preestes two or three.
Heer is a miteyn eek, that ye may see.
He that his hond wol putte in this miteyn,
He shal have multiplying of his greyn,
Whan he hath sowen, be it whete or otes,
So that he offre pens, or elles grotes.
Good men and wommen, o thing warne I yow,
If any wight be in this chirche now,
That hath doon sinne horrible, that he
Dar nat, for shame, of it y-shriven be,
Or any womman, be she yong or old,
That hath y-maad hir housbond cokewold,
Swich folk shul have no power ne no grace
To offren to my reliks in this place.
And who-so findeth him out of swich blame,
He wol com up and offre in goddes name,
And I assoille him by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle y-graunted was to me."
By this gaude have I wonne, yeer by yeer,

An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner.
I stonde lyk a clerk in my pulpet,
And whan the lewed peple is doun y-set,
I preche, so as ye han herd bifore,
And telle an hundred false Iapes more.
Than peyne I me to strecche forth the nekke,
And est and west upon the peple I bekke,
As doth a dowve sitting on a berne.
Myn hondes and my tonge goon so yerne,
That it is Ioye to see my bisinesse.
Of avaryce and of swich cursednesse
Is al my preching, for to make hem free
To yeve her pens, and namely un-to me.
For my entente is nat but for to winne,
And no-thing for correccioun of sinne.
I rekke never, whan that they ben beried,
Though that her soules goon a-blakeberied!
For certes, many a predicacioun
Comth ofte tyme of yvel entencioun;
Som for plesaunce of folk and flaterye,
To been avaunced by ipocrisye,
And som for veyne glorie, and som for hate.
For, whan I dar non other weyes debate,
Than wol I stinge him with my tonge smerte
In preching, so that he shal nat asterte
To been defamed falsly, if that he
Hath trespased to my brethren or to me.
For, though I telle noght his propre name,
Men shal wel knowe that it is the same
By signes and by othere circumstances.
Thus quyte I folk that doon us displesances;
Thus spitte I out my venim under hewe
Of holynesse, to seme holy and trewe.
But shortly myn entente I wol devyse;
I preche of no-thing but for coveityse.
Therfor my theme is yet, and ever was—

"*Radix malorum est cupiditas.*"

Thus can I preche agayn that same vyce
Which that I use, and that is avaryce.
But, though my-self be gilty in that sinne,
Yet can I maken other folk to twinne
From avaryce, and sore to repente.
But that is nat my principal entente.
I preche no-thing but for coveityse;
Of this matere it oughte y-nogh suffyse.
Than telle I hem ensamples many oon
Of olde stories, longe tyme agoon:
For lewed peple loven tales olde;
Swich thinges can they wel reporte and holde.
What? trowe ye, the whyles I may preche,
And winne gold and silver for I teche,
That I wol live in povert wilfully?
Nay, nay, I thoghte it never trewely!
For I wol preche and begge in sondry londes;
I wol not do no labour with myn hondes,
Ne make baskettes, and live therby,
Because I wol nat beggen ydelly.
I wol non of the apostles counterfete;
I wol have money, wolle, chese, and whete,
Al were it yeven of the povrest page,
Or of the povrest widwe in a village,
Al sholde hir children sterve for famyne.
Nay! I wol drinke licour of the vyne,
And have a Ioly wenche in every toun.
But herkneth, lordings, in conclusioun;
Your lyking is that I shal telle a tale.
Now, have I dronke a draughte of corny ale,
By god, I hope I shal yow telle a thing
That shal, by resoun, been at your lyking.
For, though myself be a ful vicious man,
A moral tale yet I yow telle can,
Which I am wont to preche, for to winne.
Now holde your pees, my tale I wol beginne.

THE PARDONERS TALE.

Here biginneth the Pardoners Tale.

In Flaundres whylom was a companye
Of yonge folk, that haunteden folye,
As revel, hasard, stewes, and tavernes,
Wher-as, with harpes, lutes, and giternes,
They daunce and pleye at dees bothe day and night,
And ete also and drinken over hir might,
Thurgh which they doon the devel sacrifyse
With-in that develes temple, in cursed wyse,
By superfluitee abhominable;
Hir othes been so grete and so dampnable,
That it is grisly for to here hem swere;
Our blissed lordes body they to-tere;
Hem thoughte Iewes rente him noght y-nough;
And ech of hem at otheres sinne lough.
And right anon than comen tombesteres
Fetys and smale, and yonge fruytesteres,
Singers with harpes, baudes, wafereres,
Whiche been the verray develes officeres
To kindle and blowe the fyr of lecherye,
That is annexed un-to glotonye;
The holy writ take I to my witnesse,
That luxurie is in wyn and dronkenesse.
Lo, how that dronken Loth, unkindely,
Lay by his doghtres two, unwitingly;
So dronke he was, he niste what he wroghte.
Herodes, (who-so wel the stories soghte),
Whan he of wyn was replet at his feste,
Right at his owene table he yaf his heste
To sleen the Baptist Iohn ful giltelees.
Senek seith eek a good word doutelees;
He seith, he can no difference finde
Bitwix a man that is out of his minde
And a man which that is dronkelewe,
But that woodnesse, y-fallen in a shrewe,
Persevereth lenger than doth dronkenesse.

O glotonye, ful of cursednesse,
O cause first of our confusioun,
O original of our dampnacioun,
Til Crist had boght us with his blood agayn!
Lo, how dere, shortly for to sayn,
Aboght was thilke cursed vileinye;
Corrupt was al this world for glotonye!
Adam our fader, and his wyf also,
Fro Paradys to labour and to wo
Were driven for that vyce, it is no drede;
For whyl that Adam fasted, as I rede,
He was in Paradys; and whan that he
Eet of the fruyt defended on the tree,
Anon he was out-cast to wo and peyne.
O glotonye, on thee wel oghte us pleyne!
O, wiste a man how many maladyes
Folwen of excesse and of glotonyes,
He wolde been the more mesurable
Of his diete, sittinge at his table.
Allas! the shorte throte, the tendre mouth,
Maketh that, Est and West, and North and South,
In erthe, in eir, in water men to-swinke
To gete a glotoun deyntee mete and drinke!
Of this matere, o Paul, wel canstow trete,
'Mete un-to wombe, and wombe eek un-to mete,
Shal god destroyen bothe,' as Paulus seith.
Allas! a foul thing is it, by my feith,
To seye this word, and fouler is the dede,
Whan man so drinketh of the whyte and rede,
That of his throte he maketh his privee,
Thurgh thilke cursed superfluitee.
The apostel weping seith ful pitously,
'Ther walken many of whiche yow told have I,
I seye it now weping with pitous voys,
That they been enemys of Cristes croys,
Of whiche the ende is deeth, wombe is her god.'
O wombe! O bely! O stinking cod,
Fulfild of donge and of corrupcioun!

At either ende of thee foul is the soun.
How greet labour and cost is thee to finde!
Thise cokes, how they stampe, and streyne, and grinde,
And turnen substaunce in-to accident,
To fulfille al thy likerous talent! 540
Out of the harde bones knokke they
The mary, for they caste noght a-wey
That may go thurgh the golet softe and swote;
Of spicerye, of leef, and bark, and rote
Shal been his sauce y-maked by delyt,
To make him yet a newer appetyt. 546
But certes, he that haunteth swich delyces
Is deed, whyl that he liveth in tho vyces.
A lecherous thing is wyn, and dronkenesse
Is ful of stryving and of wrecchednesse.
O dronke man, disfigured is thy face, 551
Sour is thy breeth, foul artow to embrace,
And thurgh thy dronke nose semeth the soun
As though thou seydest ay 'Sampsoun, Sampsoun';
And yet, god wot, Sampsoun drank never no wyn. 555
Thou fallest, as it were a stiked swyn;
Thy tonge is lost, and al thyn honest cure;
For dronkenesse is verray sepulture
Of mannes wit and his discrecioun. 559
In whom that drinke hath dominacioun,
He can no conseil kepe, it is no drede.
Now kepe yow fro the whyte and fro the rede,
And namely fro the whyte wyn of Lepe,
That is to selle in Fish-strete or in Chepe.
This wyn of Spayne crepeth subtilly 565
In othere wynes, growing faste by,
Of which ther ryseth swich fumositee,
That whan a man hath dronken draughtes three,
And weneth that he be at hoom in Chepe,
He is in Spayne, right at the toune of Lepe, 570
Nat at the Rochel, ne at Burdeux toun;
And thanne wol he seye, 'Sampsoun, Sampsoun.'
But herkneth, lordings, o word, I yow preye,
That alle the sovereyn actes, dar I seye,
Of victories in the olde testament, 575
Thurgh verray god, that is omnipotent,
Were doon in abstinence and in preyere;
Loketh the Bible, and ther ye may it lere.
Loke, Attila, the grete conquerour,
Deyde in his sleep, with shame and dishonour, 580
Bledinge ay at his nose in dronkenesse;
A capitayn shoulde live in sobrenesse.
And over al this, avyseth yow right wel
What was comaunded un-to Lamuel — 585
Nat Samuel, but Lamuel, seye I —
Redeth the Bible, and finde it expresly
Of wyn-yeving to hem that han lustyse.
Na-more of this, for it may wel suffyse.
And now that I have spoke of glotonye,
Now wol I yow defenden hasardrye. 590
Hasard is verray moder of lesinges,
And of deceite, and cursed forsweringes,
Blaspheme of Crist, manslaughtre, and wast also
Of catel and of tyme; and forthermo,
It is repreve and contrarie of honour 595
For to ben holde a commune hasardour.
And ever the hyër he is of estaat,
The more is he holden desolaat.
If that a prince useth hasardrye,
In alle governaunce and policye 600
He is, as by commune opinioun,
Y-holde the lasse in reputacioun.
Stilbon, that was a wys embassadour,
Was sent to Corinthe, in ful greet honour, 604
Fro Lacidomie, to make hir alliaunce.
And whan he cam, him happede, par chaunce,
That alle the grettest that were of that lond,
Pleyinge atte hasard he hem fond.
For which, as sone as it mighte be, 609
He stal him hoom agayn to his contree,
And seyde, 'ther wol I nat lese my name;
Ne I wol nat take on me so greet defame,
Yow for to allye un-to none hasardours.
Sendeth othere wyse embassadours; 614
For, by my trouthe, me were lever dye,
Than I yow sholde to hasardours allye.
For ye that been so glorious in honours
Shul nat allyen yow with hasardours

As by my wil, ne as by my tretee.'
This wyse philosophre thus seyde he.
Loke eek that, to the king Demetrius
The king of Parthes, as the book seith us,
Sente him a paire of dees of gold in scorn,
For he hadde used hasard ther-biforn;
For which he heeld his glorie or his renoun
At no value or reputacioun.
Lordes may finden other maner pley
Honeste y-nough to dryve the day awey.
Now wol I speke of othes false and grete
A word or two, as olde bokes trete.
Gret swering is a thing abhominable,
And false swering is yet more reprevable.
The heighe god forbad swering at al,
Witnesse on Mathew; but in special
Of swering seith the holy Ieremye,
'Thou shalt seye sooth thyn othes, and nat lye,
And swere in dome, and eek in right-wisnesse;'
But ydel swering is a cursednesse.
Bihold and see, that in the firste table
Of heighe goddes hestes honurable,
How that the seconde heste of him is this—
'Tak nat my name in ydel or amis.'
Lo, rather he forbedeth swich swering
Than homicyde or many a cursed thing;
I seye that, as by ordre, thus it stondeth;
This knowen, that his hestes understondeth,
How that the second heste of god is that.
And forther over, I wol thee telle al plat,
That vengeance shal nat parten from his hous,
That of his othes is to outrageous.
'By goddes precious herte, and by his nayles,
And by the blode of Crist, that it is in Hayles,
Seven is my chaunce, and thyn is cink and treye;
By goddes armes, if thou falsly pleye,
This dagger shal thurgh-out thyn herte go'—
This fruyt cometh of the bicched bones two,
Forswering, ire, falsnesse, homicyde.
Now, for the love of Crist that for us dyde,
Leveth your othes, bothe grete and smale;
But, sirs, now wol I telle forth my tale.

THISE ryotoures three, of whiche I telle,
Longe erst er pryme rong of any belle,
Were set hem in a taverne for to drinke;
And as they satte, they herde a belle clinke
Biforn a cors, was caried to his grave;
That oon of hem gan callen to his knave,
'Go bet,' quod he, 'and axe redily,
What cors is this that passeth heer forby;
And look that thou reporte his name wel.'
'Sir,' quod this boy, 'it nedeth never-a-del.
It was me told, er ye cam heer, two houres;
He was, pardee, an old felawe of youres;
And sodeynly he was y-slayn to-night,
For-dronke, as he sat on his bench upright;
Ther cam a privee theef, men clepeth Deeth,
That in this contree al the peple sleeth,
And with his spere he smoot his herte a-two,
And wente his wey with-outen wordes mo.
He hath a thousand slayn this pestilence:
And, maister, er ye come in his presence,
Me thinketh that it were necessarie
For to be war of swich an adversarie:
Beth redy for to mete him evermore.
Thus taughte me my dame, I sey namore.'
'By seinte Marie,' seyde this taverner,
'The child seith sooth, for he hath slayn this yeer,
Henne over a myle, with-in a greet village,
Both man and womman, child and hyne, and page.
I trowe his habitacioun be there;
To been avysed greet wisdom it were.

Er that he dide a man in dishonour.' 691
'Ye, goddes armes,' quod this ryotour,
'Is it swich peril with him for to mete?
I shal him seke by wey and eek by strete,
I make a vow to goddes digne bones!
Herkneth, felawes, we three been al ones; 696
Lat ech of us holde up his hond til other,
And ech of us bicomen otheres brother,
And we wol sleen this false traytour Deeth;
He shal be slayn, which that so many sleeth, 700
By goddes dignitee, er it be night.'
Togidres han thise three her trouthes plight,
To live and dyen ech of hem for other,
As though he were his owene y-boren brother.
And up they sterte al dronken, in this rage, 705
And forth they goon towardes that village,
Of which the taverner had spoke biforn,
And many a grisly ooth than han they sworn,
And Cristes blessed body they to-rente—
'Deeth shal be deed, if that they may him hente.' 710
Whan they han goon nat fully half a myle,
Right as they wolde han troden over a style,
An old man and a povre with hem mette.
This olde man ful mekely hem grette,
And seyde thus, 'now, lordes, god yow see!' 715
The proudest of thise ryotoures three
Answerde agayn, 'what? carl, with sory grace,
Why artow al forwrapped save thy face?
Why livestow so longe in so greet age?'
This olde man gan loke in his visage, 720
And seyde thus, 'for I ne can nat finde
A man, though that I walked in-to Inde,
Neither in citee nor in no village,
That wolde chaunge his youthe for myn age;
And therfore moot I han myn age stille,
As longe time as it is goddes wille. 726
Ne deeth, allas! ne wol nat han my lyf;
Thus walke I, lyk a restelees caityf,
And on the ground, which is my modres gate,
I knokke with my staf, bothe erly and late, 730
And seye, "leve moder, leet me in!
Lo, how I vanish, flesh, and blood, and skin!
Allas! whan shul my bones been at reste?
Moder, with yow wolde I chaunge my cheste,
That in my chambre longe tyme hath be, 735
Ye! for an heyre clout to wrappe me!"
But yet to me she wol nat do that grace,
For which ful pale and welked is my face.
But, sirs, to yow it is no curteisye
To speken to an old man vileinye, 740
But he trespasse in worde, or elles in dede.
In holy writ ye may your-self wel rede,
"Agayns an old man, hoor upon his heed,
Ye sholde aryse;" wherfor I yeve yow reed,
Ne dooth un-to an old man noon harm now, 745
Na-more than ye wolde men dide to yow
In age, if that ye so longe abyde;
And god be with yow, wher ye go or ryde.
I moot go thider as I have to go.'
'Nay, olde cherl, by god, thou shalt nat so,' 750
Seyde this other hasardour anon;
'Thou partest nat so lightly, by seint Iohn!
Thou spak right now of thilke traitour Deeth,
That in this contree alle our frendes sleeth.
Have heer my trouthe, as thou art his aspye, 755
Tel wher he is, or thou shalt it abye,
By god, and by the holy sacrament!
For soothly thou art oon of his assent,
To sleen us yonge folk, thou false theef!'

'Now, sirs,' quod he, 'if that yow be so leef
To finde Deeth, turne up this croked wey,
For in that grove I lafte him, by my fey,
Under a tree, and ther he wol abyde;
Nat for your boost he wol him no-thing hyde.
See ye that ook? right ther ye shul him finde.
God save yow, that boghte agayn mankinde,
And yow amende!'—thus seyde this olde man.
And everich of thise ryotoures ran,
Til he cam to that tree, and ther they founde
Of florins fyne of golde y-coyned rounde
Wel ny an eighte busshels, as hem thoughte.
No lenger thanne after Deeth they soughte,
But ech of hem so glad was of that sighte,
For that the florins been so faire and brighte,
That doun they sette hem by this precious hord.
The worste of hem he spake the firste word.
'Brethren,' quod he, 'tak kepe what I seye;
My wit is greet, though that I bourde and pleye.
This tresor hath fortune un-to us yiven,
In mirthe and Iolitee our lyf to liven,
And lightly as it comth, so wol we spende.
Ey! goddes precious dignitee! who wende
To-day, that we sholde han so fair a grace?
But mighte this gold be caried fro this place
Hoom to myn hous, or elles un-to youres—
For wel ye woot that al this gold is oures—
Than were we in heigh felicitee.
But trewely, by daye it may nat be;
Men wolde seyn that we were theves stronge,
And for our owene tresor doon us honge.
This tresor moste y-caried be by nighte
As wysly and as slyly as it mighte.
Wherfore I rede that cut among us alle
Be drawe, and lat se wher the cut wol falle;
And he that hath the cut with herte blythe
Shal renne to the toune, and that ful swythe,
And bringe us breed and wyn ful prively.
And two of us shul kepen subtilly
This tresor well; and, if he wol nat tarie,
Whan it is night, we wol this tresor carie
By oon assent, wher-as us thinketh best.'
That oon of hem the cut broughte in his fest,
And bad hem drawe, and loke wher it wol falle;
And it fil on the yongeste of hem alle;
And forth toward the toun he wente anon.
And al-so sone as that he was gon,
That oon of hem spak thus un-to that other,
'Thou knowest wel thou art my sworne brother,
Thy profit wol I telle thee anon.
Thou woost wel that our felawe is agon;
And heer is gold, and that ful greet plentee,
That shal departed been among us three.
But natheles, if I can shape it so
That it departed were among us two,
Hadde I nat doon a freendes torn to thee?'
That other answerde, 'I noot how that may be;
He woot how that the gold is with us tweye,
What shal we doon, what shal we to him seye?'
'Shal it be conseil?' seyde the firste shrewe,
'And I shal tellen thee, in wordes fewe,
What we shal doon, and bringe it wel aboute.'
'I graunte,' quod that other, 'out of doute,
That, by my trouthe, I wol thee nat biwreye.'
'Now,' quod the firste, 'thou woost wel we be tweye,
And two of us shul strenger be than oon.
Look whan that he is set, and right anoon

Arys, as though thou woldest with him pleye;
And I shal ryve him thurgh the sydes tweye
Whyl that thou strogelest with him as in game,
And with thy dagger look thou do the same;
And than shal al this gold departed be,
My dere freend, bitwixen me and thee;
Than may we bothe our lustes al fulfille,
And pleye at dees right at our owene wille.'
And thus acorded been thise shrewes tweye
To sleen the thridde, as ye han herd me seye.
This yongest, which that wente un-to the toun,
Ful ofte in herte he rolleth up and doun
The beautee of thise florins newe and brighte.
'O lord!' quod he, 'if so were that I mighte
Have al this tresor to my-self allone,
Ther is no man that liveth under the trone
Of god, that sholde live so mery as I!'
And atte laste the feend, our enemy,
Putte in his thought that he shold poyson beye,
With which he mighte sleen his felawes tweye;
For-why the feend fond him in swich lyvinge,
That he had leve him to sorwe bringe,
For this was outrely his fulle entente
To sleen hem bothe, and never to repente.
And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he tarie,
Into the toun, un-to a pothecarie,
And preyed him, that he him wolde selle
Som poyson, that he mighte his rattes quelle;
And eek ther was a polcat in his hawe,
That, as he seyde, his capouns hadde y-slawe,
And fayn he wolde wreke him, if he mighte,
On vermin, that destroyed him by nighte.
The pothecarie answerde, 'and thou shalt have
A thing that, al-so god my soule save,
In al this world ther nis no creature,
That ete or dronke hath of this confiture
Noght but the mountance of a corn of whete,
That he ne shal his lyf anon forlete;
Ye, sterve he shal, and that in lasse whyle
Than thou wolt goon a paas nat but a myle;
This poyson is so strong and violent.'
This cursed man hath in his hond y-hent
This poyson in a box, and sith he ran
In-to the nexte strete, un-to a man,
And borwed [of] him large botels three;
And in the two his poyson poured he;
The thridde he kepte clene for his drinke.
For al the night he shoop him for to swinke
In caryinge of the gold out of that place.
And whan this ryotour, with sory grace,
Had filled with wyn his grete botels three,
To his felawes agayn repaireth he.
What nedeth it to sermone of it more?
For right as they had cast his deeth bifore,
Right so they han him slayn, and that anon.
And whan that this was doon, thus spak that oon,
'Now lat us sitte and drinke, and make us merie,
And afterward we wol his body berie.'
And with that word it happed him, par cas,
To take the botel ther the poyson was,
And drank, and yaf his felawe drinke also,
For which anon they storven bothe two.
But, certes, I suppose that Avicen
Wroot never in no canon, ne in no fen,
Mo wonder signes of empoisoning
Than hadde thise wrecches two, er hir ending.
Thus ended been thise homicydes two,
And eek the false empoysoner also.

O cursed sinne, ful of cursednesse!
O traytours homicyde, o wikkednesse!
O glotonye, luxurie, and hasardrye!
Thou blasphemour of Crist with vileinye

And othes grete, of usage and of pryde!
Allas! mankinde, how may it bityde,
That to thy creatour which that thee wroghte,
And with his precious herte-blood thee boghte,
Thou art so fals and so unkinde, allas!
Now, goode men, god forgeve yow your trespas,
And ware yow fro the sinne of avaryce.
Myn holy pardoun may yow alle waryce,
So that ye offre nobles or sterlinges,
Or elles silver broches, spones, ringes.
Boweth your heed under this holy bulle!
Cometh up, ye wyves, offreth of your wolle!
Your name I entre heer in my rolle anon;
In-to the blisse of hevene shul ye gon;
I yow assoile, by myn heigh power,
Yow that wol offre, as clene and eek as cleer
As ye were born; and, lo, sirs, thus I preche.
And Iesu Crist, that is our soules leche,
So graunte yow his pardon to receyve;
For that is best; I wol yow nat deceyve.
But sirs, o word forgat I in my tale,
I have relikes and pardon in my male,
As faire as any man in Engelond,
Whiche were me yeven by the popes hond.
If any of yow wol, of devocioun,
Offren, and han myn absolucioun,
Cometh forth anon, and kneleth heer adoun,
And mekely receyveth my pardoun:
Or elles, taketh pardon as ye wende,
Al newe and fresh, at every tounes ende,
So that ye offren alwey newe and newe
Nobles and pens, which that be gode and trewe.
It is an honour to everich that is heer,
That ye mowe have a suffisant pardoneer
Tassoille yow, in contree as ye ryde,
For aventures which that may bityde.
Peraventure ther may falle oon or two
Doun of his hors, and breke his nekke atwo.
Look which a seuretee is it to yow alle
That I am in your felaweship y-falle,
That may assoille yow, bothe more and lasse,
Whan that the soule shal fro the body passe.
I rede that our hoste heer shal biginne,
For he is most envoluped in sinne.
Com forth, sir hoste, and offre first anon,
And thou shalt kisse the reliks everichon,
Ye, for a grote! unbokel anon thy purs.'
'Nay, nay,' quod he, 'than have I Cristes curs!
Lat be,' quod he, 'it shal nat be, so theech!
Thou woldest make me kisse thyn old breech,
And swere it were a relik of a seint,
Thogh it were with thy fundement depeint!
But by the croys which that seint Eleyne fond,
I wolde I hadde thy coillons in myn hond
In stede of relikes or of seintuarie;
Lat cutte hem of, I wol thee helpe hem carie;
They shul be shryned in an hogges tord.'
This pardoner answerde nat a word;
So wrooth he was, no word ne wolde he seye.
'Now,' quod our host, 'I wol no lenger pleye
With thee, ne with noon other angry man.'
But right anon the worthy knight bigan,
Whan that he saugh that al the peple lough,
'Na-more of this, for it is right y-nough;
Sir pardoner, be glad and mery of chere;
And ye, sir host, that been to me so dere,
I prey yow that ye kisse the pardoner.
And pardoner, I prey thee, drawe thee neer,
And, as we diden, lat us laughe and pleye.'
Anon they kiste, and riden forth hir weye.

Here is ended the Pardoners Tale.

GROUP D.

THE WIFE OF BATH'S PROLOGUE.

The Prologe of the Wyves Tale of Bathe.

'Experience, though noon auctoritee
Were in this world, were right y-nough to me
To speke of wo that is in mariage;
For, lordinges, sith I twelf yeer was of age,
Thonked be god that is eterne on lyve,
Housbondes at chirche-dore I have had fyve;
For I so ofte have y-wedded be;
And alle were worthy men in hir degree.
But me was told certeyn, nat longe agon is,
That sith that Crist ne wente never but onis
To wedding in the Cane of Galilee,
That by the same ensample taughte he me
That I ne sholde wedded be but ones.
Herke eek, lo! which a sharp word for the nones
Besyde a welle Iesus, god and man,
Spak in repreve of the Samaritan:
"Thou hast y-had fyve housbondes," quod he,
"And thilke man, the which that hath now thee,
Is noght thyn housbond;" thus seyde he certeyn;
What that he mente ther-by, I can nat seyn;
But that I axe, why that the fifthe man
Was noon housbond to the Samaritan?
How manye mighte she have in mariage?
Yet herde I never tellen in myn age
Upon this nombre diffinicioun;
Men may devyne and glosen up and doun.
But wel I woot expres, with-oute lye,
God bad us for to wexe and multiplye;
That gentil text can I wel understonde.
Eek wel I woot he seyde, myn housbonde
Sholde lete fader and moder, and take me;
But of no nombre mencion made he,
Of bigamye or of octogamye;
Why sholde men speke of it vileinye?
Lo, here the wyse king, dan Salomon;
I trowe he hadde wyves mo than oon;
As, wolde god, it leveful were to me
To be refresshed half so ofte as he!
Which yifte of god hadde he for alle his wyvis!
No man hath swich, that in this worlde alyve is.
God woot, this noble king, as to my wit,
The firste night had many a mery fit
With ech of hem, so wel was him on lyve!
Blessed be god that I have wedded fyve!
Welcome the sixte, whan that ever he shal.
For sothe, I wol nat kepe me chast in al;
Whan myn housbond is fro the world y-gon,
Som Cristen man shal wedde me anon;
For thanne thapostle seith, that I am free
To wedde, a goddes half, wher it lyketh me.
He seith that to be wedded is no sinne;
Bet is to be wedded than to brinne.
What rekketh me, thogh folk seye vileinye
Of shrewed Lameth and his bigamye?
I woot wel Abraham was an holy man,
And Iacob eek, as ferforth as I can;
And ech of hem hadde wyves mo than two;
And many another holy man also.
Whan saugh ye ever, in any maner age,
That hye god defended mariage
By expres word? I pray you, telleth me;
Or wher comanded he virginitee?
I woot as wel as ye, it is no drede,
Thapostel, whan he speketh of maydenhede;
He seyde, that precept ther-of hadde he noon.
Men may conseille a womman to been oon,
But conseilling is no comandement;
He putte it in our owene Iugement.

For hadde god comanded maydenhede,
Thanne hadde he dampned wedding with the dede;
And certes, if ther were no seed y-sowe,
Virginitee, wher-of than sholde it growe?
Poul dorste nat comanden atte leste
A thing of which his maister yaf noon heste.
The dart is set up for virginitee;
Cacche who so may, who renneth best lat see.
But this word is nat take of every wight,
But ther as god list give it of his might.
I woot wel, that thapostel was a mayde;
But natheless, thogh that he wroot and sayde,
He wolde that every wight were swich as he,
Al nis but conseil to virginitee;
And for to been a wyf, he yaf me leve
Of indulgence; so it is no repreve
To wedde me, if that my make dye,
With-oute excepcioun of bigamye.
Al were it good no womman for to touche,
He mente as in his bed or in his couche;
For peril is bothe fyr and tow tassemble;
Ye knowe what this ensample may resemble.
This is al and som, he heeld virginitee
More parfit than wedding in freletee.
Freeltee clepe I, but-if that he and she
Wolde leden al hir lyf in chastitee.
I graunte it wel, I have noon envye,
Thogh maydenhede preferre bigamye;
Hem lyketh to be clene, body and goost,
Of myn estaat I nil nat make no boost.
For wel ye knowe, a lord in his household,
He hath nat every vessel al of gold;
Somme been of tree, and doon hir lord servyse.
God clepeth folk to him in sondry wyse,
And everich hath of god a propre yifte,
Som this, som that, — as him lyketh shifte.
Virginitee is greet perfeccioun,
And continence eek with devocioun.
But Crist, that of perfeccioun is welle,
Bad nat every wight he sholde go selle
All that he hadde, and give it to the pore,
And in swich wyse folwe him and his fore.
He spak to hem that wolde live parfitly;
And lordinges, by your leve, that am nat I.
I wol bistowe the flour of al myn age
In the actes and in fruit of mariage.
Telle me also, to what conclusioun
Were membres maad of generacioun,
And for what profit was a wight y-wroght?
Trusteth right wel, they wer nat maad for noght.
Glose who-so wole, and seye bothe up and doun,
That they were maked for purgacioun
Of urine, and our bothe thinges smale
Were eek to knowe a femele from a male,
And for noon other cause: sey ye no?
The experience woot wel it is noght so;
So that the clerkes be nat with me wrothe,
I sey this, that they maked been for bothe,
This is to seye, for office, and for ese
Of engendrure, ther we nat god displese.
Why sholde men elles in hir bokes sette,
That man shal yelde to his wyf hir dette?
Now wher-with sholde he make his payement,
If he ne used his sely instrument?
Than were they maad up-on a creature,
To purge uryne, and eek for engendrure?
But I seye noght that every wight is holde,
That hath swich harneys as I to yow tolde,
To goon and usen hem in engendrure;
Than sholde men take of chastitee no cure.
Crist was a mayde, and shapen as a man,
And many a seint, sith that the world bigan,
Yet lived they ever in parfit chastitee.
I nil envye no virginitee;
Lat hem be breed of pured whete-seed,
And lat us wyves hoten barly-breed;
And yet with barly-breed, Mark telle can,
Our lord Iesu refresshed many a man.
In swich estaat as god hath cleped us
I wol persevere, I nam nat precious.

In wyfhode I wol use myn instrument
As frely as my maker hath it sent.
If I be daungerous, god yeve me sorwe!
Myn housbond shal it have bothe eve and morwe,
Whan that him list com forth and paye his dette.
An housbonde I wol have, I nil nat lette,
Which shal be bothe my dettour and my thral
And have his tribulacioun with-al
Up-on his flessh, whyl that I am his wyf.
I have the power duringe al my lyf
Up-on his propre body, and noght he.
Right thus the apostel tolde it un-to me;
And bad our housbondes for to love us weel.
Al this sentence me lyketh every-deel'—

Up sterte the Pardoner, and that anon,
'Now dame,' quod he, 'by god and by seint Iohn,
Ye been a noble prechour in this cas!
I was aboute to wedde a wyf; allas! 166
What sholde I bye it on my flesh so dere?
Yet hadde I lever wedde no wyf to-yere!'
'Abyde!' quod she, 'my tale is nat bigonne;
Nay, thou shalt drinken of another tonne
Er that I go, shal savoure wors than ale.
And whan that I have told thee forth my tale
Of tribulacioun in mariage,
Of which I am expert in al myn age,
This to seyn, my-self have been the whippe; —
Than maystow chese whether thou wolt sippe
Of thilke tonne that I shal abroche.
Be war of it, er thou to ny approche;
For I shal telle ensamples mo than ten.
Who-so that nil be war by othere men,
By him shul othere men corrected be.
The same wordes wryteth Ptholomee;
Rede in his Almageste, and take it there.'
'Dame, I wolde pray yow, if your wil it were,'
Seyde this Pardoner, 'as ye bigan,
Telle forth your tale, spareth for no man,
And teche us yonge men of your praktike.'
'Gladly,' quod she, 'sith it may yow lyke.
But yet I praye to al this companye,
If that I speke after my fantasye,
As taketh not a-grief of that I seye;
For myn entente nis but for to pleye.
Now sires, now wol I telle forth my tale.—
As ever mote I drinken wyn or ale,
I shal seye sooth, tho housbondes that I hadde,
As three of hem were gode and two were badde.
The three men were gode, and riche, and olde;
Unnethe mighte they the statut holde
In which they were bounden un-to me.
Ye woot wel what I mene of this, pardee!
As help me god, I laughe whan I thinke
How pitously a-night I made hem swinke;
And by my fey, I tolde of it no stoor.
They had me yeven hir gold and hir tresoor;
Me neded nat do lenger diligenee
To winne hir love, or doon hem reverence.
They loved me so wel, by god above,
That I ne tolde no deyntee of hir love!
A wys womman wol sette hir ever in oon
To gete hir love, ther as she hath noon.
But sith I hadde hem hoolly in myn hond,
And sith they hadde me yeven all hir lond,
What sholde I taken hede hem for to plese,
But it were for my profit and myn ese?
I sette hem so a-werke, by my fey,
That many a night they songen "weilawey!"
The bacoun was nat fet for hem, I trowe,
That som men han in Essex at Dunmowe.
I governed hem so wel, after my lawe,
That ech of hem ful blisful was and fawe
To bringe me gaye thinges fro the fayre.
They were ful glad whan I spak to hem fayre;

For god it woot, I chidde hem spitously.
Now herkneth, how I bar me proprely,
Ye wyse wyves, that can understonde.
Thus shul ye speke and bere hem wrong on honde;
For half so boldely can ther no man
Swere and lyen as a womman can.
I sey nat this by wyves that ben wyse,
But-if it be whan they hem misavyse.
A wys wyf, if that she can hir good,
Shal beren him on hond the cow is wood,
And take witnesse of hir owene mayde
Of hir assent; but herkneth how I sayde.
'Sir olde kaynard, is this thyn array?
Why is my neighebores wyf so gay?
She is honoured over-al ther she goth;
I sitte at hoom, I have no thrifty cloth.
What dostow at my neighebores hous?
Is she so fair? artow so amorous?
What rowneye with our mayde? *benedicite!*
Sir olde lechour, lat thy Iapes be!
And if I have a gossib or a freend,
Without gilt, thou chydest as a feend,
If that I walke or pleye un-to his hous!
Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous,
And prechest on thy bench, with yvel preef!
Thou seist to me, it is a greet meschief
To wedde a povre womman, for costage;
And if that she be riche, of heigh parage,
Than seistow that it is a tormentrye
To suffre hir pryde and his malencolye.
And if that she be fair, thou verray knave,
Thou seyst that every holour wol hir have;
She may no whyle in chastitee abyde,
That is assailled up-on ech a syde.
Thou seyst, som folk desyre us for richesse,
Somme for our shap, and somme for our fairnesse;
And som, for she can outher singe or daunce,
And som, for gentillesse and daliaunce;
Som, for hir handes and hir armes smale;
Thus goth al to the devel by thy tale.
Thou seyst, men may nat kepe a castel-wal;
It may so longe assailled been over-al.
And if that she be foul, thou seist that she
Coveiteth every man that she may se;
For as a spaynel she wol on him lepe,
Til that she finde som man hir to chepe;
Ne noon so grey goos goth ther in the lake,
As, seistow, that wol been with-oute make.
And seyst, it is an hard thing for to welde
A thing that no man wol, his thankes, helde.
Thus seistow, lorel, whan thow goost to bedde;
And that no wys man nedeth for to wedde,
Ne no man that entendeth un-to hevene.
With wilde thonder-dint and firy levene
Mote thy welked nekke be to-broke!
Thow seyst that dropping houses, and eek smoke,
And chyding wyves, maken men to flee
Out of hir owene hous; a! *benedicite!*
What eyleth swich an old man for to chyde?
Thow seyst, we wyves wol our vyces hyde
Til we be fast, and than we wol hem shewe;
Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe!
Thou seist, that oxen, asses, hors, and houndes,
They been assayed at diverse stoundes;
Bacins, lavours, er that men hem bye,
Spones and stoles, and al swich housbondrye,
And so been pottes, clothes, and array;
But folk of wyves maken noon assay
Til they be wedded; olde dotard shrewe!
And than, seistow, we wol oure vices shewe.
Thou seist also, that it displeseth me
But-if that thou wolt preyse my beautee,
And but thou poure alwey up-on my face,
And clepe me "faire dame" in every place;
And but thou make a feste on thilke day
That I was born, and make me fresh and gay,
And but thou do to my norice honour

And to my chamberere with-inne my bour,
And to my fadres folk and his allyes; —
Thus seistow, olde barel ful of lyes!
And yet of our apprentice Ianekyn,
For his crisp heer, shyninge as gold so fyn,
And for he squiereth me bothe up and doun,
Yet hastow caught a fals suspecioun;
I wol hym noght, thogh thou were deed to-morwe.
But tel me this, why hydestow, with sorwe,
The keyes of thy cheste awey fro me?
It is my good as wel as thyn, pardee.
What wenestow make an idiot of our dame?
Now by that lord, that called is seint Iame,
Thou shalt nat bothe, thogh that thou were wood,
Be maister of my body and of my good;
That oon thou shalt forgo, maugree thyne yën;
What nedeth thee of me to enquere or spyën?
I trowe, thou woldest loke me in thy chiste!
Thou sholdest seye, "wyf, go wher thee liste,
Tak your disport, I wol nat leve no talis;
I knowe yow for a trewe wyf, dame Alis."
We love no man that taketh kepe or charge
Wher that we goon, we wol ben at our large.
Of alle men y-blessed moot he be,
The wyse astrologien Dan Ptholome,
That seith this proverbe in his Almageste,
"Of alle mën his wisdom is the hyeste,
That rekketh never who hath the world in honde."
By this proverbe thou shalt understonde,
Have thou y-nogh, what thar thee recche or care
How merily that othere folkes fare?
For certeyn, olde dotard, by your leve,
Ye shul have queynte right y-nough at eve.
He is to greet a nigard that wol werne
A man to lighte his candle at his lanterne;
He shal have never the lasse light, pardee;
Have thou y-nough, thee thar nat pleyne thee.
Thou seyst also, that if we make us gay
With clothing and with precious array,
That it is peril of our chastitee;
And yet, with sorwe, thou most enforce thee,
And seye thise wordes in the apostles name,
"In habit, maad with chastitee and shame,
Ye wommen shul apparaille yow," quod he,
"And noght in tressed heer and gay perree,
As perles, ne with gold, ne clothes riche;"
After thy text, ne after thy rubriche
I wol nat wirche as muchel as a gnat.
Thou seydest this, that I was lyk a cat;
For who-so wolde senge a cattes skin,
Thanne wolde the cat wel dwellen in his in;
And if the cattes skin be slyk and gay,
She wol nat dwelle in house half a day,
But forth she wole, er any day be dawed,
To shewe hir skin, and goon a-caterwawed;
This is to seye, if I be gay, sir shrewe,
I wol renne out, my borel for to shewe.
Sire olde fool, what eyleth thee to spyën?
Thogh thou preye Argus, with his hundred yën,
To be my warde-cors, as he can best,
In feith, he shal nat kepe me but me lest;
Yet coude I make his berd, so moot I thee.
Thou seydest eek, that ther ben thinges three,
The whiche thinges troublen al this erthe,
And that no wight ne may endure the ferthe;
O leve sir shrewe, Iesu shorte thy lyf!
Yet prechestow, and seyst, an hateful wyf
Y-rekened is for oon of thise meschances.
Been ther none othere maner resemblances
That ye may lykne your parables to,
But-if a sely wyf be oon of tho?
Thou lykenest wommanes love to helle,
To bareyne lond, ther water may not dwelle.

Thou lyknest it also to wilde fyr;
The more it brenneth, the more it hath desyr
To consume every thing that brent wol be.
Thou seyst, that right as wormes shende a tree,
Right so a wyf destroyeth hir housbonde;
This knowe they that been to wyves bonde.'
Lordinges, right thus, as ye have understonde,
Bar I stifly myne olde housbondes on honde,
That thus they seyden in hir dronkenesse;
And al was fals, but that I took witnesse
On Ianekin and on my nece also.
O lord, the peyne I dide hem and the wo,
Ful giltelees, by goddes swete pyne!
For as an hors I coude byte and whyne.
I coude pleyne, thogh I were in the gilt,
Or elles often tyme hadde I ben spilt.
Who-so that first to mille comth, first grint;
I pleyned first, so was our werre y-stint.
They were ful glad to excusen hem ful blyve
Of thing of which they never agilte hir lyve.
Of wenches wolde I beren him on honde,
Whan that for syk unnethes mighte he stonde.
Yet tikled it his herte, for that he
Wende that I hadde of him so greet chiertee.
I swoor that al my walkinge out by nighte
Was for tespye wenches that he dighte;
Under that colour hadde I many a mirthe.
For al swich wit is yeven us in our birthe;
Deceite, weping, spinning god hath yive
To wommen kindely, whyl they may live.
And thus of o thing I avaunte me,
Atte ende I hadde the bettre in ech degree,
By sleighte, or force, or by som maner thing,
As by continuel murmur or grucching;
Namely a-bedde hadden they meschaunce,
Ther wolde I chyde and do hem no plesaunce;
I wolde no lenger in the bed abyde,
If that I felte his arm over my syde,
Til he had maad his raunson un-to me;
Than wolde I suffre him do his nycetee.
And ther-fore every man this tale I telle,
Winne who-so may, for al is for to selle.
With empty hand men may none haukes lure;
For winning wolde I al his lust endure,
And make me a feyned appetyt;
And yet in bacon hadde I never delyt;
That made me that ever I wolde hem chyde.
For thogh the pope had seten hem biside,
I wolde nat spare hem at hir owene bord.
For by my trouthe, I quitte hem word for word.
As help me verray god omnipotent,
Thogh I right now sholde make my testament,
I ne owe hem nat a word that it nis quit.
I broghte it so aboute by my wit,
That they moste yeve it up, as for the beste;
Or elles hadde we never been in reste.
For thogh he loked as a wood leoun,
Yet sholde he faille of his conclusioun.
Thanne wolde I seye, 'gode lief, tak keep
How mekely loketh Wilkin oure sheep;
Com neer, my spouse, lat me ba thy cheke!
Ye sholde been al pacient and meke,
And han a swete spyced conscience.
Sith ye so preche of Iobes pacience.
Suffreth alwey, sin ye so wel can preche;
And but ye do, certein we shal yow teche
That it is fair to have a wyf in pees.
Oon of us two moste bowen, doutelees;
And sith a man is more resonable
Than womman is, ye moste been suffrable.
What eyleth yow to grucche thus and grone?
Is it for ye wolde have my queynte allone?
Why taak it al, lo, have it every-deel;
Peter! I shrewe yow but ye love it weel!
For if I wolde selle my *bele chose*,
I coude walke as fresh as is a rose;
But I wol kepe it for your owene tooth.
Ye be to blame, by god, I sey yow sooth.'

Swiche maner wordes hadde we on honde.
Now wol I speken of my fourthe housbonde.
My fourthe housbonde was a revelour,
This is to seyn, he hadde a paramour;
And I was yong and ful of ragerye,
Stiborn and strong, and Ioly as a pye.
Wel coude I daunce to an harpe smale,
And singe, y-wis, as any nightingale,
Whan I had dronke a draughte of swete wyn.
Metellius, the foule cherl, the swyn,
That with a staf birafte his wyf hir lyf,
For she drank wyn, thogh I hadde been his wyf,
He sholde nat han daunted me fro drinke;
And, after wyn, on Venus moste I thinke:
For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,
A likerous mouth moste han a likerous tayl.
In womman vinolent is no defence,
This knowen lechours by experience.
But, lord Crist! whan that it remembreth me
Up-on my yowthe, and on my Iolitee,
It tikleth me aboute myn herte rote.
Unto this day it dooth myn herte bote
That I have had my world as in my tyme.
But age, allas! that al wol envenyme,
Hath me biraft my beautee and my pith;
Lat go, fare-wel, the devel go therwith!
The flour is goon, ther is na-more to telle,
The bren, as I best can, now moste I selle;
But yet to be right mery wol I fonde.
Now wol I tellen of my fourthe housbonde.
I seye, I hadde in herte greet despyt
That he of any other had delyt.
But he was quit, by god and by seint Ioce!
I made him of the same wode a croce;
Nat of my body in no foul manere,
But certeinly, I made folk swich chere,
That in his owene grece I made him frye
For angre, and for verray Ialousye.
By god, in erthe I was his purgatorie,
For which I hope his soule be in glorie.
For god it woot, he sat ful ofte and song
Whan that his shoo ful bitterly him wrong.
Ther was no wight, save god and he, that wiste,
In many wyse, how sore I him twiste.
He deyde whan I cam fro Ierusalem,
And lyth y-grave under the rode-beem,
Al is his tombe noght so curious
As was the sepulcre of him, Darius,
Which that Appelles wroghte subtilly;
It nis but wast to burie him preciously.
Lat him fare-wel, god yeve his soule reste,
He is now in the grave and in his cheste.
Now of my fifthe housbond wol I telle.
God lete his soule never come in helle!
And yet was he to me the moste shrewe;
That fele I on my ribbes al by rewe,
And ever shal, un-to myn ending-day.
But in our bed he was so fresh and gay,
And ther-with-al so wel coude he me glose,
Whan that he wolde han my *bele chose*,
That thogh he hadde me bet on every boon,
He coude winne agayn my love anoon.
I trowe I loved him beste, for that he
Was of his love daungerous to me.
We wommen han, if that I shal nat lye,
In this matere a queynte fantasye;
Wayte what thing we may nat lightly have,
Ther-after wol we crye al-day and crave.
Forbede us thing, and that desyren we;
Prees on us faste, and thanne wol we flee.
With daunger oute we al our chaffare;
Greet prees at market maketh dere ware,
And to greet cheep is holde at litel prys;
This knoweth every womman that is wys.
My fifthe housbonde, god his soule blesse!
Which that I took for love and no richesse,
He som-tyme was a clerk of Oxenford,
And had left scole, and wente at hoom to bord
With my gossib, dwellinge in oure toun,
God have hir soule! hir name was Alisoun.
She knew myn herte and eek my privetee
Bet than our parisshe-preest, so moot I thee!

To hir biwreyed I my conseil al.
For had myn housbonde pissed on a wal,
Or doon a thing that sholde han cost his lyf,
To hir, and to another worthy wyf,
And to my nece, which that I loved weel,
I wolde han told his conseil every-deel.
And so I dide ful often, god it woot,
That made his face ful often reed and hoot
For verray shame, and blamed him-self for he
Had told to me so greet a privetee.
And so bifel that ones, in a Lente,
(So often tymes I to my gossib wente,
For ever yet I lovede to be gay,
And for to walke, in March, Averille, and May,
Fro hous to hous, to here sondry talis),
That Iankin clerk, and my gossib deme Alis,
And I my-self, in-to the feldes wente.
Myn housbond was at London al that Lente;
I hadde the bettre leyser for to pleye,
And for to see, and eek for to be seye
Of lusty folk; what wiste I wher my grace
Was shapen for to be, or in what place?
Therefore I made my visitaciouns,
To vigilies and to processiouns,
To preching eek and to thise pilgrimages,
To pleyes of miracles and mariages,
And wered upon my gaye scarlet gytes.
Thise wormes, ne thise motthes, ne thise mytes,
Upon my peril, frete hem never a deel;
And wostow why? for they were used weel.
Now wol I tellen forth what happed me.
I seye, that in the feeldes walked we,
Til trewely we hadde swich daliance,
This clerk and I, that of my purveyance
I spak to him, and seyde him, how that he,
If I were widwe, sholde wedde me.
For certeinly, I sey for no bobance,
Yet was I never withouten purveyance
Of mariage, nof othere thinges eek.
I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek,
That hath but oon hole for to sterte to,
And if that faille, thanne is al y-do.
I bar him on honde, he hadde enchanted me;
My dame taughte me that soutiltee.
And eek I seyde, I mette of him al night;
He wolde han slayn me as I lay up-right,
And al my bed was ful of verray blood,
And yet I hope that he shal do me good;
For blood bitokeneth gold, as me was taught.
And al was fals, I dremed of it right naught,
But as I folwed ay my dames lore,
As wel of this as of other thinges more.
But now sir, lat me see, what I shal seyn?
A! ha! by god, I have my tale ageyn.
Whan that my fourthe housbond was on bere,
I weep algate, and made sory chere,
As wyves moten, for it is usage,
And with my coverchief covered my visage;
But for that I was purveyed of a make,
I weep but smal, and that I undertake.
To chirche was myn housbond born a-morwe
With neighebores, that for him maden sorwe;
And Iankin oure clerk was oon of tho
As help me god, whan that I saugh him go
After the bere, me thoughte he hadde a paire
Of legges and of feet so clene and faire,
That al myn herte I yaf un-to his hold.
He was, I trowe, a twenty winter old,
And I was fourty, if I shal seye sooth;
But yet I hadde alwey a coltes tooth.
Gat-tothed I was, and that bicam me weel;
I hadde the prente of sëynt Venus seel.
As help me god, I was a lusty oon,
And faire and riche, and yong, and wel bigoon;
And trewely, as myne housbondes tolde me,
I had the beste *quoniam* mighte be.
For certes, I am al Venerien
In felinge, and myn herte is Marcien.
Venus me yaf my lust, my likerousnesse,
And Mars yaf me my sturdy hardinesse.
Myn ascendent was Taur, and Mars therinne.

Allas! allas! that ever love was sinne!
I folwed ay myn inclinacioun
By vertu of my constellacioun;
That made me I coude noght withdrawe
My chambre of Venus from a good felawe.
Yet have I Martes mark up-on my face,
And also in another privee place.
For, god so wis be my savacioun,
I ne loved never by no discrecioun
But ever folwede myn appetyt,
Al were he short or long, or blak or whyt;
I took no kepe, so that he lyked me,
How pore he was, ne eek of what degree.
What sholde I seye, but, at the monthes ende,
This Ioly clerk Iankin, that was so hende,
Hath wedded me with greet solempnitee,
And to him yaf I al the lond and fee
That ever was me yeven ther-bifore;
But afterward repented me full sore.
He nolde suffre nothing of my list.
By god, he smoot me ones on the list,
For that I rente out of his book a leef,
That of the strook myn ere wex al deef.
Stiborn I was as is a leonesse,
And of my tonge a verray Iangleresse,
And walke I wolde, as I had doon biforn,
From hous to hous, al-though he had it sworn.
For which he often tymes wolde preche,
And me of olde Romayn gestes teche,
How he, Simplicius Gallus, lefte his wyf,
And hir forsook for terme of al his lyf,
Noght but for open-heeded he hir say
Lokinge out at his dore upon a day.
Another Romayn tolde he me by name,
That, for his wyf was at a someres game
With-oute his witing, he forsook hir eke.
And than wolde he up-on his Bible seke
That ilke proverbe of Ecclesiaste,
Wher he comandeth and forbedeth faste,
Man shal nat suffre his wyf go roule aboute;
Than wolde he seye right thus, with-outen doute,
"Who-so that buildeth his hous al of salwes,
And priketh his blinde hors over the falwes,
And suffreth his wyf to go seken halwes,
Is worthy to been hanged on the galwes!"
But al for noght, I sette noght an hawe
Of his proverbes nof his olde sawe,
Ne I wolde nat of him corrected be.
I hate him that my vices telleth me,
And so do mo, god woot! of us than I.
Thus made him with me wood al outrely;
I nolde noght forbere him in no cas.
Now wol I seye yow sooth, by seint Thomas,
Why that I rente out of his book a leef,
For which he smoot me so that I was deef.
He hadde a book that gladly, night and day,
For his desport he wolde rede alway.
He cleped it Valerie and Theofraste,
At whiche book he lough alwey ful faste.
And eek ther was som-tyme a clerk at Rome,
A cardinal, that highte Seint Ierome,
That made a book agayn Iovinian;
In whiche book eek ther was Tertulan,
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowys,
That was abbesse nat fer fro Parys;
And eek the Parables of Salomon,
Ovydes Art, and bokes many on,
And alle thise wer bounden in o volume.
And every night and day was his custume,
Whan he had leyser and vacacioun
From other worldly occupacioun,
To reden on this book of wikked wyves.
He knew of hem mo legendes and lyves
Than been of gode wyves in the Bible.
For trusteth wel, it is an impossible
That any clerk wol speke good of wyves,
But-if it be of holy seintes lyves,
Ne of noon other womman never the mo.
Who peyntede the leoun, tel me who?
By god, if wommen hadde writen stories,
As clerkes han with-inne hir oratories,
They wolde han writen of men more wikkednesse
Than all the mark of Adam may redresse.
The children of Mercurie and of Venus
Been in hir wirking ful contrarious;
Mercurie loveth wisdom and science,
And Venus loveth ryot and dispence.
And, for hir diverse disposicioun,
Ech falleth in others exaltacioun;

And thus, god woot! Mercurie is desolat
In Pisces, wher Venus is axaltat;
And Venus falleth wher Mercurie is reysed;
Therfore no womman of no clerk is preysed.
The clerk, whan he is old, and may noght do
Of Venus werkes worth his olde sho,
Than sit he doun, and writ in his dotage
That wommen can nat kepe hir mariage!
But now to purpos, why I tolde thee
That I was beten for a book, pardee.
Up-on a night Iankin, that was our syre,
Redde on his book, as he sat by the fyre,
Of Eva first, that, for hir wikkednesse,
Was al mankinde broght to wrecchednesse.
For which that Iesu Crist him-self was slayn,
That boghte us with his herte-blood agayn.
Lo, here expres of womman may ye finde,
That womman was the los of al mankinde.
Tho redde he me how Sampson loste his heres,
Slepinge, his lemman kitte hem with hir sheres;
Thurgh whiche tresoun loste he bothe his yën.
Tho redde he me, if that I shal nat lyen,
Of Hercules and of his Dianyre,
That caused him to sette himself a-fyre.
No-thing forgat he the penaunce and wo
That Socrates had with hise wyves two;
How Xantippa caste pisse up-on his heed;
This sely man sat stille, as he were deed;
He wyped his heed, namore dorste he seyn
But "er that thonder stinte, comth a reyn."
Of Phasipha, that was the quene of Crete,
For shrewednesse, him thoughte the tale swete;
Fy! spek na-more — it is a grisly thing —
Of hir horrible lust and hir lyking.
Of Clitemistra, for hir lecherye,
That falsly made hir housbond for to dye,
He redde it with ful good devocioun.
He tolde me eek for what occasioun
Amphiorax at Thebes loste his lyf;
Myn housbond hadde a legende of his wyf,
Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold
Hath prively un-to the Grekes told
Wher that hir housbonde hidde him in a place,
For which he hadde at Thebes sory grace.
Of Lyma tolde he me, and of Lucye,
They bothe made hir housbondes for to dye;
That oon for love, that other was for hate;
Lyma hir housbond, on an even late,
Empoysoned hath, for that she was his fo.
Lucya, likerous, loved hir housbond so,
That, for he sholde alwey up-on hir thinke,
She yaf him swich a maner love-drinke,
That he was deed, er it were by the morwe;
And thus algates housbondes han sorwe.
Than tolde he me, how oon Latumius
Compleyned to his felawe Arrius,
That in his gardin growed swich a tree,
On which, he seyde, how that his wyves three
Hanged hem-self for herte despitous.
"O leve brother," quod this Arrius,
"Yif me a plante of thilke blissed tree,
And in my gardin planted shal it be!"
Of latter date, of wyves hath he red,
That somme han slayn hir housbondes in hir bed,
And lete hir lechour dighte hir al the night
Whyl that the corps lay in the floor up-right.
And somme han drive nayles in hir brayn
Whyl that they slepte, and thus they han hem slayn.
Somme han hem yeve poysoun in hir drinke.
He spak more harm than herte may bithinke.
And ther-with-al, he knew of mo proverbes
Than in this world ther growen gras or herbes.
"Bet is," quod he, "thyn habitacioun

Be with a leoun or a foul dragoun,
Than with a womman usinge for to chyde.
Bet is," quod he, "hye in the roof abyde
Than with an angry wyf doun in the hous;
They been so wikked and contrarious;
They haten that hir housbondes loveth ay." 781
He seyde, "a womman cast hir shame away,
Whan she cast of hir smok;" and forther-mo,
"A fair womman, but she be chaast also,
Is lyk a gold ring in a sowes nose." 785
Who wolde wenen, or who wolde suppose
The wo that in myn herte was, and pyne?
And whan I saugh he wolde never fyne
To reden on this cursed book al night,
Al sodeynly three leves have I plight
Out of this book, right as he radde, and eke, 791
I with my fist so took him on the cheke,
That in our fyr he fil bakward adoun.
And he up-stirte as dooth a wood leoun,
And with his fist he smoot me on the heed, 795
That in the floor I lay as I were deed.
And when he saugh how stille that I lay,
He was agast, and wolde han fled his way,
Til atte laste out of my swogh I breyde:
"O! hastow slayn me, false theef?" I seyde, 800
"And for my land thus hastow mordred me?
Er I be deed, yet wol I kisse thee."
And neer he cam, and kneled faire adoun,
And seyde, "dere suster Alisoun,
As help me god, I shal thee never smyte; 805
That I have doon, it is thy-self to wyte.
Forveye it me, and that I thee biseke"—
And yet eft-sones I hitte him on the cheke,
And seyde, "theef, thus muchel am I wreke;
Now wol I dye, I may no lenger speke."
But atte laste, with muchel care and wo,
We fille acorded, by us selven two. 812
He yaf me al the brydel in myn hond
To han the governaunce of hous and lond,
And of his tonge and of his hond also,
And made him brenne his book anon right tho. 816
And whan that I hadde geten un-to me,
By maistrie, al the soveraynetee,
And that he seyde, "myn owene trewe wyf,
Do as thee lust the terme of al thy lyf,
Keep thyn honour, and keep eek myn estaat"— 821
After that day we hadden never debaat.
God help me so, I was to him as kinde
As any wyf from Denmark un-to Inde,
And also trewe, and so was he to me.
I prey to god that sit in magestee, 826
So blesse his soule, for his mercy dere!
Now wol I seye my tale, if ye wol here.'

Biholde the wordes bitween the Somonour and the Frere.

The Frere lough, whan he hadde herd al this,
'Now, dame,' quod he, 'so have I ioye or blis, 830
This is a long preamble of a tale!'
And whan the Somnour herde the Frere gale,
'Lo!' quod the Somnour, 'goddes armes two!
A frere wol entremette him ever-mo.
Lo, gode men, a flye and eek a frere 835
Who falle in every dish and eek matere.
What spekestow of preambulacioun?
What! amble, or trotte, or pees, or go sit doun;
Thou lettest our disport in this manere.'
'Ye, woltow so, sir Somnour?' quod the Frere, 840
'Now, by my feith, I shal, er that I go,
Telle of a Somnour swich a tale or two,
That alle the folk shal laughen in this place.'
'Now elles, Frere, I bishrewe thy face,'
Quod this Somnour, 'and I bishrewe me,
But-if I telle tales two or thre 846
Of freres er I come to Sidingborne,
That I shal make thyn herte for to morne;

For wel I woot thy pacience is goon.'
Our hoste cryde 'pees! and that anoon!'
And seyde, 'lat the womman telle hir tale.
Ye fare as folk that dronken been of ale.

Do, dame, tel forth your tale, and that is best.'
'Al redy, sir,' quod she, 'right as yow lest,
If I have licence of this worthy Frere.'
'Yis, dame,' quod he, 'tel forth, and I wol here.'

Here endeth the Wyf of Bathe hir Prologe.

THE TALE OF THE WYF OF BATHE.

Here biginneth the Tale of the Wyf of Bathe.

In tholde dayes of the king Arthour,
Of which that Britons speken greet honour,
Al was this land fulfild of fayerye.
The elf-queen, with hir Ioly companye,
Daunced ful ofte in many a grene mede;
This was the olde opinion, as I rede.
I speke of manye hundred yeres ago;
But now can no man see none elves mo.
For now the grete charitee and prayeres
Of limitours and othere holy freres,
That serchen every lond and every streem,
As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem,
Blessinge halles, chambres, kichenes, boures,
Citees, burghes, castels, hye toures,
Thropes, bernes, shipnes, dayeryes,
This maketh that ther been no fayeryes.
For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
Ther walketh now the limitour him-self
In undermeles and in morweninges,
And seyth his matins and his holy thinges
As he goth in his limitacioun.
Wommen may go saufly up and doun,
In every bush, or under every tree;
There is noon other incubus but he,
And he ne wol doon hem but dishonour.
And so bifel it, that this king Arthour
Hadde in his hous a lusty bacheler,
That on a day cam rydinge fro river;
And happed that, allone as she was born,
He saugh a mayde walkinge him biforn,
Of whiche mayde anon, maugree hir heed,
By verray force he rafte hir maydenheed;
For which oppressioun was swich clamour
And swich pursute un-to the king Arthour,
That dampned was this knight for to be deed
By cours of lawe, and sholde han lost his heed
Paraventure, swich was the statut tho;
But that the quene and othere ladies mo
So longe preyeden the king of grace,
Til he his lyf him graunted in the place,
And yaf him to the quene al at hir wille,
To chese, whether she wolde him save or spille.
The quene thanketh the king with al her might,
And after this thus spak she to the knight,
Whan that she saugh hir tyme, up-on a day:
'Thou standest yet,' quod she, 'in swich array,
That of thy lyf yet hastow no suretee.
I grante thee lyf, if thou canst tellen me
What thing is it that wommen most desyren?
Be war, and keep thy nekke-boon from yren.
And if thou canst nat tellen it anon,
Yet wol I yeve thee leve for to gon
A twelf-month and a day, to seche and lere
An answere suffisant in this matere.
And suretee wol I han, er that thou pace,
Thy body for to yelden in this place.'
Wo was this knight and sorwefully he syketh;

But what! he may nat do al as him lyk-
eth.
And at the laste, he chees him for to
wende,
And come agayn, right at the yeres ende,
With swich answere as god wolde him
purveye;
And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth
his weye.
He seketh every hous and every place,
Wher-as he hopeth for to finde grace,
To lerne, what thing wommen loven most;
But he ne coude arryven in no cost,
Wher-as he mighte finde in this matere
Two creatures accordinge in-fere.
Somme seyde, wommen loven best
richesse,
Somme seyde, honour, somme seyde,
Iolynesse;
Somme, riche array, somme seyden, lust
abedde,
And ofte tyme to be widwe and wedde.
Somme seyde, that our hertes been
most esed,
Whan that we been y-flatered and
y-plesed.
He gooth ful ny the sothe, I wol nat lye;
A man shal winne us best with flaterye;
And with attendance, and with bisinesse,
Been we y-lymed, bothe more and lesse.
And somme seyn, how that we loven
best
For to be free, and do right as us lest,
And that no man repreve us of our vyce,
But seye that we be wyse, and no-thing
nyce.
For trewely, ther is noon of us alle,
If any wight wol clawe us on the galle,
That we nil kike, for he seith us sooth;
Assay, and he shal finde it that so dooth.
For be we never so vicious with-inne,
We wol been holden wyse, and clene of
sinne.
And somme seyn, that greet delyt han
we
For to ben holden stable and eek secree,
And in o purpos stedefastly to dwelle,
And nat biwreye thing that men us telle.
But that tale is nat worth a rake-stele;
Pardee, we wommen conne no-thing
hele;
Witnesse on Myda; wol ye here the tale?
Ovyde, amonges othere thinges smale,
Seyde, Myda hadde, under his longe heres,
Growinge up-on his heed two asses eres,
The which vyce he hidde, as he best
mighte,
Ful subtilly from every mannes sighte,
That, save his wyf, ther wiste of it na-mo.
He loved hir most, and trusted hir also;
He preyede hir, that to no creature
She sholde tellen of his disfigure.
She swoor him 'nay, for al this world
to winne,
She nolde do that vileinye or sinne,
To make hir housbond han so foul a
name;
She nolde nat telle it for hir owene
shame.'
But nathelees, hir thoughte that she
dyde,
That she so longe sholde a conseil hyde;
Hir thoughte it swal so sore aboute hir
herte,
That nedely som word hir moste asterte;
And sith she dorste telle it to no man,
Doun to a mareys faste by she ran;
Til she cam there, hir herte was a-fyre,
And, as a bitore bombleth in the myre,
She leyde hir mouth un-to the water
doun:
'Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy
soun,'
Quod she, 'to thee I telle it, and
namo;
Myn housbond hath longe asses eres two!
Now is myn herte al hool, now is it oute;
I mighte no lenger kepe it, out of doute.'
Heer may ye se, thogh we a tyme abyde,
Yet out it moot, we can no conseil
hyde;
The remenant of the tale if ye wol here,
Redeth Ovyde, and ther ye may it lere.
This knight, of which my tale is spe-
cially,
Whan that he saugh he mighte nat come
therby,
This is to seye, what wommen loven
moost,
With-inne his brest ful sorweful was the
goost;
But hoom he gooth, he mighte nat so-
iourne.
The day was come, that hoomward moste
he tourne,
And in his wey it happed him to ryde,

In al this care, under a forest-syde,
Wher-as he saugh up-on a daunce go
Of ladies foure and twenty, and yet mo;
Toward the whiche daunce he drow ful yerne,
In hope that som wisdom sholde he lerne.
But certeinly, er he came fully there,
Vanisshed was this daunce, he niste where.
No creature saugh he that bar lyf,
Save on the grene he saugh sittinge a wyf;
A fouler wight ther may no man devyse.
Agayn the knight this olde wyf gan ryse,
And seyde, 'sir knight, heer-forth ne lyth no wey.
Tel me, what that ye seken, by your fey?
Paraventure it may the bettre be;
Thise olde folk can muchel thing,' quod she.
'My leve mooder,' quod this knight certeyn,
'I nam but deed, but-if that I can seyn
What thing it is that wommen most desyre;
Coude ye me wisse, I wolde wel quyte your hyre.'
'Plighte me thy trouthe, heer in myn hand,' quod she,
'The nexte thing that I requere thee,
Thou shalt it do, if it lye in thy might;
And I wol telle it yow er it be night.'
'Have heer my trouthe,' quod the knight, 'I grante.'
'Thanne,' quod she, 'I dar me wel avante,
Thy lyf is sauf, for I wol stonde therby,
Up-on my lyf, the queen wol seye as I.
Lat see which is the proudeste of hem alle,
That wereth on a coverchief or a calle,
That dar seye nay, of that I shal thee teche;
Lat us go forth with-outen lenger speche.'
Tho rouned she a pistel in his ere,
And bad him to be glad, and have no fere.
Whan they be comen to the court, this knight
Seyde, 'he had holde his day, as he hadde hight,
And redy was his answere,' as he sayde.
Ful many a noble wyf, and many a mayde,
And many a widwe, for that they ben wyse,
The quene hir-self sittinge as a Iustyse,
Assembled been, his answere for to here;
And afterward this knight was bode appere.
To every wight comanded was silence,
And that the knight sholde telle in audience,
What thing that worldly wommen loven best.
This knight ne stood nat stille as doth a best,
But to his questioun anon answerde
With manly voys, that al the court it herde:
'My lige lady, generally,' quod he,
'Wommen desyren to have sovereyntee
As wel over hir housbond as hir love,
And for to been in maistrie him above;
This is your moste desyr, though ye me kille,
Doth as yow list, I am heer at your wille.'
In al the court ne was ther wyf ne mayde,
Ne widwe, that contraried that he sayde,
But seyden, 'he was worthy han his lyf.'
And with that word up stirte the olde wyf,
Which that the knight saugh sittinge in the grene:
'Mercy,' quod she, 'my sovereyn lady quene!
Er that your court departe, do me right.
I taughte this answere un-to the knight;
For which he plighte me his trouthe there,
The firste thing I wolde of him requere,
He wolde it do, if it lay in his might.
Bifore the court than preye I thee, sir knight,'
Quod she, 'that thou me take un-to thy wyf;
For wel thou wost that I have kept thy lyf.
If I sey fals, sey nay, up-on thy fey!'
This knight answerde, 'allas! and weylawey!
I woot right wel that swich was my biheste.

For goddes love, as chees a newe requeste;
Tak al my good, and lat my body go.'
'Nay than,' quod she, 'I shrewe us bothe two!
For thogh that I be foul, and old, and pore,
I nolde for al the metal, ne for ore,
That under erthe is grave, or lyth above,
But-if thy wyf I were, and eek thy love.'
'My love?' quod he; 'nay, my dampnacioun!
Allas! that any of my nacioun
Sholde ever so foule disparaged be!'
But al for noght, the ende is this, that he
Constreyned was, he nedes moste hir wedde;
And taketh his olde wyf, and gooth to bedde.
Now wolden som men seye, paraventure,
That, for my necligence, I do no cure
To tellen yow the Ioye and al tharray
That at the feste was that ilke day.
To whiche thing shortly answere I shal;
I seye, ther nas no Ioye ne feste at al,
Ther nas but hevinesse and muche sorwe;
For prively he wedded hir on a morwe,
And al day after hidde him as an oule;
So wo was him, his wyf looked so foule.
Greet was the wo the knight hadde in his thoght,
Whan he was with his wyf a-bedde y-broght;
He walweth, and he turneth to and fro.
His olde wyf lay smylinge evermo,
And seyde, 'o dere housbond, *benedicite!*
Fareth every knight thus with his wyf as ye?
Is this the lawe of king Arthures hous?
Is every knight of his so dangerous?
I am your owene love and eek your wyf;
I am she, which that saved hath your lyf;
And certes, yet dide I yow never unright;
Why fare ye thus with me this firste night?
Ye faren lyk a man had lost his wit;
What is my gilt? for goddes love, tel me it,
And it shal been amended, if I may.'
'Amended?' quod this knight, 'allas! nay, nay!
It wol nat been amended never mo!
Thou art so loothly, and so old also,
And ther-to comen of so lowe a kinde,
That litel wonder is, thogh I walwe and winde.
So wolde god myn herte wolde breste!'
'Is this,' quod she, 'the cause of your unreste?'
'Ye, certainly,' quod he, 'no wonder is.'
'Now, sire,' quod she, 'I coude amende al this,
If that me liste, er it were dayes three,
So wel ye mighte bere yow un-to me.
But for ye speken of swich gentillesse
As is descended out of old richesse,
That therfore sholden ye be gentil men,
Swich arrogance is nat worth an hen.
Loke who that is most vertuous alway,
Privee and apert, and most entendeth ay
To do the gentil dedes that he can,
And tak him for the grettest gentil man.
Crist wol, we clayme of him our gentillesse,
Nat of our eldres for hir old richesse.
For thogh they yeve us al hir heritage,
For which we clayme to been of heigh parage,
Yet may they nat biquethe, for no-thing,
To noon of us hir vertuous living,
That made hem gentil men y-called be;
And bad us folwen hem in swich degree.
Wel can the wyse poete of Florence,
That highte Dant, speken in this sentence;
Lo in swich maner rym is Dantes tale:
"Ful selde up ryseth by his branches smale
Prowesse of man, for god, of his goodnesse,
Wol that of him we clayme our gentillesse;"
For of our eldres may we no-thing clayme
But temporel thing, that man may hurte and mayme.
Eek every wight wot this as wel as I,
If gentillesse were planted naturelly
Un-to a certeyn linage, doun the lyne,
Privee ne apert, than wolde they never fyne
To doon of gentillesse the faire offyce;

They mighte do no vileinye or vyce.
Tak fyr, and ber it in the derkeste hous
Bitwix this and the mount of Caucasus,
And lat men shette the dores and go thenne;
Yet wol the fyr as faire lye and brenne,
As twenty thousand men mighte it biholde;
His office naturel ay wol it holde,
Up peril of my lyf, til that it dye.
Heer may ye see wel, how that genterye
Is nat annexed to possessioun,
Sith folk ne doon hir operacioun
Alwey, as dooth the fyr, lo! in his kinde.
For, god it woot, men may wel often finde
A lordes sone do shame and vileinye;
And he that wol han prys of his gentrye
For he was boren of a gentil hous,
And hadde hise eldres noble and vertuous,
And nil him-selven do no gentle dedis,
Ne folwe his gentil auncestre that deed is,
He nis nat gentil, be he duk or erl;
For vileyns sinful dedes make a cherl.
For gentillesse nis but renomee
Of thyne auncestres, for hir heigh bountee,
Which is a strange thing to thy persone.
Thy gentillesse cometh fro god allone;
Than comth our verray gentillesse of grace,
It was no-thing biquethe us with our place.
Thenketh how noble, as seith Valerius,
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,
That out of povert roos to heigh noblesse.
Redeth Senek, and redeth eek Boëce,
Ther shul ye seen expres it that no drede is,
That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis;
And therfore, leve housbond, I thus conclude,
Al were it that myne auncestres were rude,
Yet may the hye god, and so hope I,
Grante me grace to liven vertuously.
Thanne am I gentil, whan that I biginne
To liven vertuously and weyve sinne.
And ther-as ye of povert me repreve,
The hye god, on whom that we bileve,
In wilful povert chees to live his lyf.
And certes every man, mayden, or wyf,
May understonde that Iesus, hevene king,
Ne wolde nat chese a vicious living.
Glad povert is an honest thing, certeyn;
This wol Senek and othere clerkes seyn.
Who-so that halt him payd of his poverte,
I holde him riche, al hadde he nat a sherte.
He that coveyteth is a povre wight,
For he wolde han that is nat in his might.
But he that noght hath, ne coveyteth have,
Is riche, al-though ye holde him but a knave.
Verray povert, it singeth proprely;
Iuvenal seith of povert merily:
"The povre man, whan he goth by the weye,
Bifore the theves he may singe and pleye."
Povert is hateful good, and, as I gesse,
A ful greet bringer out of bisinesse;
A greet amender eek of sapience
To him that taketh it in pacience.
Povert is this, although it seme elenge:
Possessioun, that no wight wol chalenge.
Povert ful ofte, whan a man is lowe,
Maketh his god and eek him-self to knowe.
Povert a spectacle is, as thinketh me,
Thurgh which he may his verray frendes see.
And therfore, sire, sin that I noght yow greve,
Of my povert na-more ye me repreve.
Now, sire, of elde ye repreve me;
And certes, sire, thogh noon auctoritee
Were in no book, ye gentils of honour
Seyn that men sholde an old wight doon favour,
And clepe him fader, for your gentillesse;
And auctours shal I finden, as I gesse.
Now ther ye seye, that I am foul and old,
Than drede you noght to been a cokewold;
For filthe and elde, al-so moot I thee,
Been grete wardeyns up-on chastitee.
But nathelees, sin I knowe your delyt,
I shal fulfille your worldly appetyt.

Chees now,' quod she, 'oon of thise thinges tweye,
To han me foul and old til that I deye,
And be to yow a trewe humble wyf,
And never yow displese in al my lyf,
Or elles ye wol han me yong and fair,
And take your aventure of the repair
That shal be to your hous, by-cause of me,
Or in som other place, may wel be.
Now chees your-selven, whether that yow lyketh.'
This knight avyseth him and sore syketh,
But atte laste he seyde in this manere,
'My lady and my love, and wyf so dere,
I put me in your wyse governance;
Cheseth your-self, which may be most plesance,
And most honour to yow and me also.
I do no fors the whether of the two;
For as yow lyketh, it suffiseth me.'
'Thanne have I gete of yow maistrye,' quod she,
'Syn I may chese, and governe as me lest?'
'Ye, certes, wyf,' quod he, 'I holde it best.'
'Kis me,' quod she, 'we be no lenger wrothe;
For, by my trouthe, I wol be to yow bothe,
This is to seyn, ye, bothe fair and good.
I prey to god that I mot sterven wood,
But I to yow be al-so good and trewe
As ever was wyf, sin that the world was newe.
And, but I be to-morn as fair to sene
As any lady, emperyce, or quene,
That is bitwixe the est and eke the west,
Doth with my lyf and deeth right as yow lest.
Cast up the curtin, loke how that it is.'
And whan the knight saugh verraily al this,
That she so fair was, and so yong ther-to,
For Ioye he hente hir in his armes two,
His herte bathed in a bath of blisse;
A thousand tyme a-rewe he gan hir kisse.
And she obeyed him in everything
That mighte doon him plesance or lyking.
And thus they live, un-to hir lyves ende,
In parfit Ioye; and Iesu Crist us sende
Housbondes meke, yonge, and fresshe a-bedde,
And grace toverbyde hem that we wedde.
And eek I preye Iesu shorte hir lyves
That wol nat be governed by hir wyves;
And olde and angry nigardes of dispence,
God sende hem sone verray pestilence.

Here endeth the Wyves Tale of Bathe.

THE FRIAR'S PROLOGUE.

The Prologe of the Freres tale.

THIS worthy limitour, this noble Frere
He made alwey a maner louring chere
Upon the Somnour, but for honestee
No vileyns word as yet to him spak he.
But atte laste he seyde un-to the Wyf,
'Dame,' quod he, 'god yeve yow right good lyf!
Ye han heer touched, al-so moot I thee,
In scole-matere greet difficultee;
Ye han seyd muchel thing right wel, I seye;
But dame, here as we ryden by the weye,
Us nedeth nat to speken but of game,
And lete auctoritees, on goddes name,
To preching and to scole eek of clergye.
But if it lyke to this companye
I wol yow of a somnour telle a game.
Pardee, ye may wel knowe by the name,
That of a somnour may no good be sayd;
I pray that noon of you be yvel apayd.
A somnour is a renner up and doun
With mandements for fornicacioun,
And is y-bet at every tounes ende.'

Our host tho spak, 'a! sire, ye sholde be hende
And curteys, as a man of your estaat;
In companye we wol have no debaat.
Telleth your tale, and lat the Somnour be.'
'Nay,' quod the Somnour, 'lat him seye to me
What so him list; whan it comth to my lot,
By god, I shal him quyten every grot.
I shal him tellen which a greet honour
It is to be a flateringe limitour;
And his offyce I shal him telle, y-wis.'
Our host answerde, 'pees, na-more of this.'
And after this he seyde un-to the Frere,
'Tel forth your tale, leve meister deere.'

Here endeth the Prologe of the Frere.

THE FRERES TALE.

Here biginneth the Freres tale.

WHILOM ther was dwellinge in my contree
An erchedeken, a man of heigh degree,
That boldely dide execucioun
In punisshinge of fornicacioun,
Of wicchecraft, and eek of bauderye,
Of diffamacioun, and avoutrye,
Of chirche-reves, and of testaments,
Of contractes, and of lakke of sacraments,
And eek of many another maner cryme
Which nedeth nat rehercen at this tyme;
Of usure, and of symonye also.
But certes, lechours dide he grettest wo;
They sholde singen, if that they were hente;
An smale tytheres weren foule y-shent.
If any persone wolde up-on hem pleyne,
Ther mighte asterte him no pecunial peyne
For smale tythes and for smal offringe,
He made the peple pitously to singe.
For er the bisshop caughte hem with his hook,
They weren in the erchedeknes book.
Thanne hadde he, thurgh his Iurisdiccioun,
Power to doon on hem correccioun.
He hadde a Somnour redy to his hond,
A slyer boy was noon in Engelond;
For subtilly he hadde his espiaille
That taughte him, wher that him mighte availle.
He coude spare of lechours oon or two,
To techen him to foure and twenty mo.
For thogh this Somnour wood were as an hare,
To telle his harlotrye I wol nat spare;
For we been out of his correccioun;
They han of us no Iurisdiccioun,
Ne never shullen, terme of alle hir lyves.
'Peter! so been the wommen of the styves,'
Quod the Somnour, 'y-put out of my cure!'
'Pees, with mischance and with misaventure,'
Thus seyde our host, 'and lat him telle his tale.
Now telleth forth, thogh that the Somnour gale,
Ne spareth nat myn owene maister dere.'
This false theef, this Somnour, quod the Frere,
Hadde alwey baudes redy to his hond,
As any hauk to lure in Engelond,
That tolde him al the secree that they knewe;
For hir acqueyntance was nat come of-newe.
They weren hise approwours prively;
He took him-self a greet profit therby;
His maister knew nat alwey what he wan.
With-outen mandement, a lewed man
He coude somne, on peyne of Cristes curs,
And they were gladde for to fille his purs,
And make him grete festes atte nale.

And right as Iudas hadde purses smale,
And was a theef, right swich a theef was he;
His maister hadde but half his duëtee.
He was, if I shal yeven him his laude,
A theef, and eek a Somnour, and a baude.
He hadde eek wenches at his retenue,
That, whether that sir Robert or sir Huwe,
Or Iakke, or Rauf, or who-so that it were,
That lay by hem, they told it in his ere;
Thus was the wenche and he of oon assent.
And he wolde fecche a feyned mandement,
And somne hem to the chapitre bothe two,
And pile the man, and lete the wenche go.
Thanne wolde he seye, 'frend, I shal for thy sake
Do stryken hir out of our lettres blake;
Thee thar na-more as in this cas travaille;
I am thy freend, ther I thee may availle.'
Certeyn he knew of bryberyes mo
Than possible is to telle in yeres two.
For in this world nis dogge for the bowe,
That can an hurt deer from an hool y-knowe,
Bet than this Somnour knew a sly lechour,
Or an avouter, or a paramour.
And, for that was the fruit of al his rente,
Therfore on it he sette al his entente.
And so bifel, that ones on a day
This Somnour, ever waiting on his pray,
Rood for to somne a widwe, an old ribybe,
Feynynge a cause, for he wolde brybe.
And happed that he saugh bifore him ryde
A gay yeman, under a forest-syde.
A bowe he bar, and arwes brighte and kene;
He hadde up-on a courtepy of grene;
An hat up-on his heed with frenges blake.
'Sir,' quod this Somnour, 'hayl! and wel a-take!'
'Wel-come,' quod he, 'and every good felawe!
Wher rydestow under this grene shawe?'
Seyde this yeman, 'wiltow fer to day?'
This Somnour him answerde, and seyde, 'nay;
Heer faste by,' quod he, 'is myn entente
To ryden, for to reysen up a rente
That longeth to my lordes duëtee.
'Artow thanne a bailly?' 'Ye!' quod he.
He dorste nat, for verray filthe and shame,
Seye that he was a somnour, for the name.
'*Depardieux*,' quod this yeman, 'dere brother,
Thou art a bailly, and I am another.
I am unknowen as in this contree;
Of thyn aqueyntance I wolde praye thee,
And eek of brotherhede, if that yow leste.
I have gold and silver in my cheste;
If that thee happe to comen in our shyre,
Al shal be thyn, right as thou wolt desyre.'
'Grantmercy,' quod this Somnour, 'by my feith!'
Everich in otheres hand his trouthe leith,
For to be sworne bretheren til they deye.
In daliance they ryden forth hir weye.
This Somnour, which that was as ful of Iangles,
As ful of venim been thise wariangles,
And ever enquering up-on every thing,
'Brother,' quod he, 'where is now your dwelling,
Another day if that I sholde yow seche?'
This yeman him answerde in softe speche,
'Brother,' quod he, 'fer in the north contree,
Wher, as I hope, som-tyme I shal thee see.
Er we departe, I shal thee so wel wisse,
That of myn hous ne shaltow never misse.'
'Now, brother,' quod this Somnour, 'I yow preye,
Teche me, whyl that we ryden by the weye,
Sin that ye been a baillif as am I,
Som subtiltee, and tel me feithfully
In myn offyce how I may most winne;
And spareth nat for conscience ne sinne,
But as my brother tel me, how do ye?'
'Now, by my trouthe, brother dere,' seyde he,
'As I shal tellen thee a feithful tale,
My wages been ful streite and ful smale.
My lord is hard to me and daungerous,
And myn offyce is ful laborous;
And therfore by extorcions I live.

For sothe, I take al that men wol me yive;
Algate, by sleyghte or by violence,
Fro yeer to yeer I winne al my dispence.
I can no bettre telle feithfully.'
'Now, certes,' quod this Somnour, 'so fare I;
I spare nat to taken, god it woot,
But-if it be to hevy or to hoot.
What I my gete in conseil prively,
No maner conscience of that have I;
Nere myn extorcioun, I mighte nat liven,
Ne of swiche Iapes wol I nat be shriven.
Stomak ne conscience ne knowe I noon;
I shrewe thise shrifte-fadres everichoon.
Wel be we met, by god and by seint Iame!
But, leve brother, tel me than thy name,'
Quod this Somnour; and in this menewhyle,
This yeman gan a litel for to smyle.
'Brother,' quod he, 'wiltow that I thee telle?
I am a feend, my dwelling is in helle.
And here I ryde about my purchasing,
To wite wher men wolde yeve me any thing.
My purchas is theffect of al my rente.
Loke how thou rydest for the same entente,
To winne good, thou rekkest never how;
Right so fare I, for ryde wolde I now
Un-to the worldes ende for a preye.'
'A,' quod this Somnour, '*benedicite*, what sey ye?
I wende ye were a yeman trewely.
Ye han a mannes shap as wel as I;
Han ye figure than determinat
In helle, ther ye been in your estat?'
'Nay, certeinly,' quod he, 'ther have we noon;
But whan us lyketh, we can take us oon,
Or elles make yow seme we ben shape
Som-tyme lyk a man, or lyk an ape;
Or lyk an angel can I ryde or go.
It is no wonder thing thogh it be so;
A lousy Iogelour can deceyve thee,
And pardee, yet can I more craft than he.'
'Why,' quod the Somnour, 'ryde ye thanne or goon
In sondry shap, and nat alwey in oon?'
'For we,' quod he, 'wol us swich formes make
As most able is our preyes for to take.'
'What maketh yow to han al this labour?'
'Ful many a cause, leve sir Somnour,'
Seyde this feend, 'but alle thing hath tyme.
The day is short, and it is passed pryme,
And yet ne wan I no-thing in this day.
I wol entende to winnen, if I may,
And nat entende our wittes to declare.
For, brother myn, thy wit is al to bare.
To understonde, al-thogh I tolde hem thee.
But, for thou axest why labouren we;
For, som-tyme, we ben goddes instruments,
And menes to don his comandements,
Whan that him list, up-on his creatures,
In divers art and in divers figures.
With-outen him we have no might, certayn,
If that him list to stonden ther-agayn.
And som-tyme, at our prayere, han we leve
Only the body and nat the soule greve;
Witnesse on Iob, whom that we diden wo.
And som-tyme han we might of bothe two,
This is to seyn, of soule and body eke.
And somtyme be we suffred for to seke,
Up-on a man, and doon his soule unreste,
And nat his body, and al is for the beste.
Whan he withstandeth our temptacioun,
It is a cause of his savacioun;
Al-be-it that it was nat our entente
He sholde be sauf, but that we wolde him hente.
And som-tyme be we servant un-to man,
As to the erchebisshop Seint Dunstan,
And to the apostles servant eek was I.'
'Yet tel me,' quod the Somnour, 'feithfully,
Make ye yow newe bodies thus alway
Of elements?' the feend answerde, 'nay;
Som-tyme we feyne, and som-tyme we aryse
With dede bodies in ful sondry wyse,
And speke as renably and faire and wel
As to the Phitonissa dide Samuel.
And yet wol som men seye it was nat he;
I do no fors of your divinitee.
But o thing warne I thee, I wol nat Iape,
Thou wolt algates wite how we ben shape;

Thou shalt her-afterward, my brother dere,
Com ther thee nedeth nat of me to lere.
For thou shalt by thyn owene experience
Conne in a chayer rede of this sentence
Bet than Virgyle, whyl he was on lyve,
Or Dant also; now lat us ryde blyve.
For I wol holde companye with thee
Til it be so, that thou forsake me.'
'Nay,' quod this Somnour, 'that shal nat bityde;
I am a yeman, knowen is ful wyde;
My trouthe wol I holde as in this cas.
For though thou were the devel Sathanas,
My trouthe wol I holde to my brother,
As I am sworn, and ech of us til other
For to be trewe brother in this cas;
And bothe we goon abouten our purchas.
Tak thou thy part, what that men wol thee yive,
And I shal myn; thus may we bothe live.
And if that any of us have more than other,
Lat him be trewe, and parte it with his brother.'
'I graunte,' quod the devel, 'by my fey.'
And with that word they ryden forth hir wey.
And right at the entring of the tounes ende,
To which this Somnour shoop him for to wende,
They saugh a cart, that charged was with hey,
Which that a carter droof forth in his wey.
Deep was the wey, for which the carte stood.
The carter smoot, and cryde, as he were wood,
'Hayt, Brok! hayt, Scot! what spare ye for the stones?
The feend,' quod he, 'yow fecche body and bones,
As ferforthly as ever were we foled! 1545
So muche wo as I have with yow tholed!
The devel have al, bothe hors and cart and hey!'
This Somnour seyde, 'heer shal we have a pley;'
And neer the feend he drough, as noght ne were,
Ful prively, and rouned in his ere: 1550
'Herkne, my brother, herkne, by thy feith;
Herestow nat how that the carter seith?
Hent it anon, for he hath yeve it thee,
Bothe hey and cart, and eek hise caples three.'
'Nay,' quod the devel, 'god wot, never a deel; 1555
It is nat his entente, trust me weel.
Axe him thy-self, if thou nat trowest me,
Or elles stint a while, and thou shalt see.'
This carter thakketh his hors upon the croupe,
And they bigonne drawen and to-stoupe;
'Heyt, now!' quod he, 'ther Iesu Crist yow blesse, 1561
And al his handwerk, bothe more and lesse!
That was wel twight, myn owene lyard boy!
I pray god save thee and sëynt Loy!
Now is my cart out of the slow, pardee!'
'Lo! brother,' quod the feend, 'what tolde I thee? 1566
Heer may ye see, myn owene dere brother,
The carl spak oo thing, but he thoghte another.
Lat us go forth abouten our viage;
Heer winne I no-thing up-on cariage.'
Whan that they comen som-what out of toune, 1571
This Somnour to his brother gan to roune,
'Brother,' quod he, 'heer woneth an old rebekke,
That hadde almost as lief to lese hir nekke
As for to yeve a peny of hir good. 1575
I wol han twelf pens, though that she be wood,
Or I wol sompne hir un-to our offyce;
And yet, god woot, of hir knowe I no vyce.
But for thou canst nat, as in this contree,
Winne thy cost, tak heer ensample of me.' 1580
This Somnour clappeth at the widwes gate.
'Com out,' quod he, 'thou olde viritrate!
I trowe thou hast som frere or preest with thee!'

'Who clappeth?' seyde this widwe,
'*benedicite!*
God save you, sire, what is your swete
wille?'
'I have,' quod he, 'of somonce here a
bille;
Up deyne of cursing, loke that thou be
To-morn bifore the erchedeknes knee
Tenswere to the court of certeyn thinges.'
'Now, lord,' quod she, 'Crist Iesu, king
of kinges,
So wisly helpe me, as I ne may.
I have been syk, and that ful many a day.
I may nat go so fer,' quod she, 'ne ryde,
But I be deed, so priketh it in my syde.
May I nat axe a libel, sir Somnour,
And answere there, by my procutour,
To swich thing as men wol opposen me?'
'Yis,' quod this Somnour, 'pay anon,
lat se,
Twelf pens to me, and I wol thee acquyte.
I shall no profit han ther-by but lyte;
My maister hath the profit, and nat I.
Com of, and lat me ryden hastily;
Yif me twelf pens, I may no lenger tarie.'
'Twelf pens,' quod she, 'now lady
Seinte Marie
So wisly help me out of care and sinne,
This wyde world thogh that I sholde
winne,
Ne have I nat twelf pens with-inne myn
hold.
Ye knowen wel that I am povre and old;
Kythe your almesse on me povre wrecche.'
'Nay than,' quod he, 'the foule feend
me fecche
If I thexcuse, though thou shul be spilt!'
'Alas,' quod she, 'god woot, I have no
gilt.'
'Pay me,' quod he, 'or by the swete
seinte Anne,
As I wol bere awey thy newe panne
For dette, which that thou owest me of
old,
Whan that thou madest thyn housbond
cokewold,
I payde at hoom for thy correccioun.'
'Thou lixt,' quod she, 'by my savacioun!
Ne was I never er now, widwe ne wyf,
Somoned un-to your court in al my lyf;
Ne never I nas but of my body trewe! 1621
Un-to the devel blak and rough of hewe
Yeve I thy body and my panne also!'
And whan the devel herde hir cursen so
Up-on hir knees, he seyde in this manere,
'Now Mabely, myn owene moder dere,
Is this your wil in ernest, that ye seye?'
'The devel,' quod she, 'so fecche him
er he deye,
And panne and al, but he wol him repente!'
'Nay, olde stot, that is nat myn entente,'
Quod this Somnour, 'for to repente me,
For any thing that I have had of thee;
I wolde I hadde thy smok and every
clooth!'
'Now, brother,' quod the devel, 'be
nat wrooth;
Thy body and this panne ben myne by
right.
Thou shalt with me to helle yet to-night,
Where thou shalt knowen of our privetee
More than a maister of divinitee:'
And with that word this foule feend him
hente;
Body and soule, he with the devel wente
Wher-as that somnours han hir heritage.
And god, that maked after his image
Mankinde, save and gyde us alle and
some;
And leve this Somnour good man to
bicome!
Lordinges, I coude han told yow, quod
this Frere,
Hadde I leyser for this Somnour here,
After the text of Crist [and] Poul and
Iohn,
And of our othere doctours many oon,
Swiche peynes, that your hertes mighte
agryse,
Al-be-it so, no tonge may devyse,
Thogh that I mighte a thousand winter
telle,
The peyne of thilke cursed hous of
helle.
But, for to kepe us fro that cursed place,
Waketh, and preyeth Iesu for his grace
So kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.
Herketh this word, beth war as in this
cas;
The leoun sit in his await alway

To slee the innocent, if that he may.
Disposeth ay your hertes to withstonde
The feend, that yow wolde make thral and bonde.
He may nat tempten yow over your might;
For Crist wol be your champion and knight.
And prayeth that thise Somnours hem repente
Of hir misdedes, er that the feend hem hente.

Here endeth the Freres tale.

THE SOMNOUR'S PROLOGUE.

The prologe of the Somnours Tale.

THIS Somnour in his stiropes hye stood;
Up-on this Frere his herte was so wood,
That lyk an aspen leef he quook for yre.
'Lordinges,' quod he, 'but o thing I desyre;
I yow biseke that, of your curteisye,
Sin ye han herd this false Frere lye,
As suffereth me I may my tale telle!
This Frere bosteth that he knoweth helle,
And god it woot, that it is litel wonder;
Freres and feendes been but lyte a-sonder.
For pardee, ye han ofte tyme herd telle,
How that a frere ravisshed was to helle
In spirit ones by a visioun;
And as an angel ladde him up and doun,
To shewen him the peynes that ther were,
In al the place saugh he nat a frere;
Of other folk he saugh y-nowe in wo.
Un-to this angel spak the frere tho:
"Now, sir," quod he, "han freres swich a grace
That noon of hem shal come to this place?"
"Yis," quod this angel, "many a milioun!"
And un-to Sathanas he ladde him doun.
"And now hath Sathanas," seith he, "a tayl
Brodder than of a carrik is the sayl.
Hold up thy tayl, thou Sathanas!" quod he,
"Shewe forth thyn ers, and lat the frere see
Wher is the nest of freres in this place!"
And, er that half a furlong-wey of space,
Right so as bees out swarmen from an hyve,
Out of the develes ers ther gonne dryve
Twenty thousand freres in a route,
And thurgh-out helle swarmeden aboute;
And comen agayn, as faste as they may gon,
And in his ers they crepten everichon.
He clapte his tayl agayn, and lay ful stille.
This frere, whan he loked hadde his fille
Upon the torments of this sory place,
His spirit god restored of his grace
Un-to his body agayn, and he awook;
But natheles, for fere yet he quook,
So was the develes ers ay in his minde,
That is his heritage of verray kinde.
God save yow alle, save this cursed Frere;
My prologe wol I ende in this manere.'

Here endeth the Prologe of the Somnours Tale.

THE SOMNOURS TALE.

Here biginneth the Somonour his Tale.

LORDINGES, ther is in Yorkshire, as I
gesse,
A mersshy contree called Holdernesse,
In which ther wente a limitour aboute,
To preche, and eek to begge, it is no
doute.
And so bifel, that on a day this frere
Had preched at a chirche in his manere,
And specially, aboven every thing,
Excited he the peple in his preching,
To trentals, and to yeve, for goddes sake,
Wher-with men mighten holy houses
make,
Ther as divyne service is honoured,
Nat ther as it is wasted and devoured,
Ne ther it nedeth nat for to be yive,
As to possessioners, that mowen live,
Thanked be god, in wele and habun-
daunce.
'Trentals,' seyde he, 'deliveren fro pen-
aunce
Hir freendes soules, as wel olde as yonge,
Ye, whan that they been hastily y-songe;
Nat for to holde a preest Ioly and gay,
He singeth nat but o masse in a day;
Delivereth out,' quod he, 'anon the
soules;
Ful hard it is with fleshhook or with
oules
To been y-clawed, or to brenne or bake;
Now spede yow hastily, for Cristes sake.'
And whan this frere had seyd al his en-
tente,
With *qui cum patre* forth his wey he
wente.
Whan folk in chirche had yeve him
what hem leste,
He wente his wey, no lenger wolde he
reste,
With scrippe and tipped staf, y-tukked
hye;
In every hous he gan to poure and prye,
And beggeth mele, and chese, or elles
corn.
His felawe hadde a staf tipped with
horn,
A peyre of tables al of yvory,
And a poyntel polisshed fetisly,
And wroot the names alwey, as he stood,
Of alle folk that yaf him any good
Ascaunces that he wolde for hem
preye.
'Yeve us a busshel whete, malt, or reye,
A goddes kechil, or a trip of chese,
Or elles what yow list, we may nat
chese;
A goddes halfpeny or a masse-peny,
Or yeve us of your brawn, if ye have
eny;
A dagon of your blanket, leve dame,
Our suster dere, lo! here I write your
name;
Bacon or beef, or swich thing as ye finde.
A sturdy harlot wente ay hem bihinde,
That was hir hostes man, and bar a
sak,
And what men yaf hem, leyde it on his
bak.
And whan that he was out at dore anon,
He planed awey the names everichon
That he biforn had writen in his tables;
He served hem with nyfles and with
fables.
'Nay, ther thou lixt, thou Somnour,'
quod the Frere.
'Pees,' quod our Host, 'for Cristes
moder dere;
Tel forth thy tale and spare it nat at al.'
So thryve I, quod this Somnour, so I
shall.—
So longe he wente hous by hous, til
he
Cam til an hous ther he was wont to be
Refresshed more than in an hundred
placis.
Sik lay the gode man, whos that the
place is;
Bedrede up-on a couche lowe he lay.
'*Deus hic*,' quod he, 'O Thomas, freend,
good day,'
Seyde this frere curteisly and softe.
'Thomas,' quod he, 'god yelde yow! ful
ofte
Have I up-on this bench faren ful weel.

Here have I eten many a mery meel';
And fro the bench he droof awey the cat,
And leyde adoun his potente and his hat,
And eek his scrippe, and sette him softe adoun.
His felawe was go walked in-to toun,
Forth with his knave, into that hostelrye
Wher-as he shoop him thilke night to lye.
'O dere maister,' quod this syke man,
'How han he fare sith that March bigan?
I saugh yow noght this fourtenight or more.'
'God woot,' quod he, 'laboured have I ful sore;
And specially, for thy savacioun
Have I seyd many a precious orisoun
And for our othere frendes, god hem blesse!
I have to-day been at your chirche at messe,
And seyd a sermon after my simple wit,
Nat al after the text of holy writ;
For it is hard to yow, as I suppose,
And therfore wol I teche yow al the glose.
Glosinge is a glorious thing, certeyn,
For lettre sleeth, so as we clerkes seyn.
Ther have I taught hem to be charitable,
And spende hir good ther it is resonable,
And ther I saugh our dame; a! wher is she?'
'Yond in the yerd I trowe that she be,'
Seyde this man, 'and she wol come anon.'
'Ey, maister! wel-come be ye, by seint Iohn!'
Seyde this wyf, 'how fare ye hertely?'
The frere aryseth up ful curteisly,
And hir embraceth in his armes narwe,
And kiste hir swete, and chirketh as a sparwe
With his lippes: 'dame,' quod he, 'right weel,
As he that is your servant every deel.
Thanked be god, that yow yaf soule and lyf,
Yet saugh I nat this day so fair a wyf
In al the chirche, god so save me!'
'Ye, god amende defautes, sir,' quod she,
'Algates wel-come be ye, by my fey!'
'Graunt mercy dame, this have I founde alwey.
But of your grete goodnesse, by your leve,
I wolde prey yow that ye nat yow greve,
I wol with Thomas speke a litel throwe.
Thise curats been ful necligent and slowe
To grope tendrely a conscience.
In shrift, in preching is my diligence,
And studie in Petres wordes, and in Poules.
I walke, and fisshe Cristen mennes soules,
To yelden Iesu Crist his propre rente;
To sprede his word is set al myn entente.'
'Now, by your leve, o dere sir,' quod she,
'Chydeth him weel, for seinte Trinitee.
He is as angry as a pissemyre,
Though that he have al that he can desyre.
Though I him wrye a-night and make him warm,
And on hym leye my leg outher myn arm,
He groneth lyk our boor, lyth in our sty.
Other desport right noon of him have I;
I may nat plese him in no maner cas.'
'O Thomas! *Ie vous dy*, Thomas! Thomas!
This maketh the feend, this moste ben amended.
Ire is a thing that hye god defended
And ther-of wol I speke a word or two.'
'Now maister,' quod the wyf, 'er that I go,
What wol ye dyne? I wol go ther-aboute.'
'Now dame,' quod he, '*Ie vous dy sanz doute*,
Have I nat of a capon but the livere
And of your softe breed nat but a shivere,
And after that a rosted pigges heed,
(But that I nolde no beest for me were deed),
Thanne hadde I with yow hoomly suffisaunce.

I am a man of litel sustenaunce. 1844
My spirit hath his fostring in the Bible.
The body is ay so redy and penyble
To wake, that my stomak is destroyed.
I prey yow, dame, ye be nat anoyed,
Though I so freendly yow my conseil shewe;
By god, I wolde nat telle it but a fewe.'
'Now, sir,' quod she, 'but o word er I go; 1851
My child is deed with-inne thise wykes two,
Sone after that ye wente out of this toun.'
'His deeth saugh I by revelacioun,'
Seith this frere, 'at hoom in our dortour. 1855
I dar wel seyn that, er that half an hour
After his deeth, I saugh him born to blisse
In myn avisioun, so god me wisse!
So dide our sexteyn and our fermerer,
That han been trewe freres fifty yeer;
They may now, god be thanked of his lone, 1861
Maken hir Iubilee and walke allone.
And up I roos, and al our covent eke,
With many a tere trikling on my cheke,
Withouten noyse or clateringe of belles;
Te deum was our song and no-thing elles, 1866
Save that to Crist I seyde an orisoun,
Thankinge him of his revelacioun.
For sir and dame, trusteth me right weel,
Our orisons been more effectueel, 1870
And more we seen of Cristes secree thinges
Than burel folk, al-though they weren kinges.
We live in povert and in abstinence,
And burel folk in richesse and despence
Of mete and drinke, and in hir foul delyt. 1875
We han this worldes lust al in despyt.
Lazar and Dives liveden diversly,
And diverse guerdon hadden they therby.
Who-so wol preye, he moot faste and be clene,
And fatte his soule and make his body lene. 1880
We fare as seith thapostle; cloth and fode
Suffysen us, though they be nat ful gode.
The clennesse and the fastinge of us freres
Maketh that Crist accepteth our preyeres.
Lo, Moyses fourty dayes and fourty night 1885
Fasted, er that the heighe god of might
Spak with him in the mountain of Sinay.
With empty wombe, fastinge many a day,
Receyved he the lawe that was writen
With goddess finger; and Elie, wel ye witen, 1890
In mount Oreb, er he hadde any speche
With hye god, that is our lyves leche,
He fasted longe and was in contemplaunce.
Aaron, that hadde the temple in governaunce, 1894
And eek the othere preestes everichon,
In-to the temple whan they sholde gon
To preye for the peple, and do servyse,
They nolden drinken, in no maner wyse,
No drinke, which that mighte hem dronke make,
But there in abstinence preye and wake 1900
Lest that they deyden; tak heed what I seye.
But they be sobre that for the peple preye,
War that I seye, — namore! for it suffyseth.
Our lord Iesu, as holy writ devyseth,
Yaf us ensample of fastinge and preyeres. 1905
Therfor we mendinants, we sely freres,
Been wedded to poverte and continence,
To charitee, humblesse, and abstinence,
To persecucion for rightwisnesse,
To wepinge, misericorde, and clennesse. 1910
And therfor may ye see that our preyeres —
I speke of us, we mendinants, we freres —
Ben to the hye god more acceptable
Than youres, with your festes at the table.
Fro Paradys, first, if I shal nat lye, 1915
Was man out chaced for his glotonye;
And chaast was man in Paradys, certeyn.

But herkne now, Thomas, what I shall seyn.
I ne have no text of it, as I suppose,
But I shall finde it in a maner glose,
That specially our swete lord Iesus
Spak this by freres, whan he seyde thus:
"Blessed be they that povre in spirit been."
And so forth al the gospel may ye seen,
Wher it be lyker our professioun,
Or hirs that swimmen in possessioun.
Fy on hir pompe and on hir glotonye!
And for hir lewednesse I hem diffye.
Me thinketh they ben lyk Iovinian,
Fat as a whale, and walkinge as a swan;
Al vinolent as botel in the spence.
Hir preyer is of ful gret reverence;
Whan they for soules seye the psalm of Davit,
Lo, "buf!" they seye "*cor meum eructavit!*"
Who folweth Cristes gospel and his fore,
But we that humble been and chast and pore,
Werkers of goddes word, not auditours?
Therfore, right as an hauk up, at a sours,
Up springeth in-to their, right so prayeres
Of charitable and chaste bisy freres
Maken hir sours to goddes eres two.
Thomas! Thomas! so mote I ryde or go,
And by that lord that clepid is seint Yve,
Nere thou our brother, sholdestou nat thryve!
In our chapitre praye we day and night
To Crist, that he thee sende hele and might,
Thy body for to welden hastily.'
'God woot,' quod he, 'no-thing ther-of fele I;
As help me Crist, as I, in fewe yeres,
Han spended, up-on dyvers maner freres,
Ful many a pound; yet fare I never the bet.
Certeyn, my good have I almost biset.
Farwel, my gold! for it is al ago!'
The frere answerde, 'O Thomas, dostow so?
What nedeth yow diverse freres seche?
What nedeth him that hath a parfit leche
To sechen othere leches in the toun?
Your inconstance is your confusioun.
Holde ye than me, or elles our covent,
To praye for yow ben insufficient?
Thomas, that Iape nis nat worth a myte;
Your maladye is for we han to lyte.
"A! yif that covent half a quarter otes!"
"A! yif that covent four and twenty grotes!"
"A! yif that frere a peny, and lat him go!"
Nay, nay, Thomas! it may no-thing be so.
What is a ferthing worth parted in twelve?
Lo, ech thing that is oned in him-selve
Is more strong than whan it is to-scattered.
Thomas, of me thou shalt nat been y-flatered;
Thou woldest han our labour al for noght.
The hye god, that al this world hath wroght,
Seith that the werkman worthy is his hyre.
Thomas! noght of your tresor I desyre
As for my-self, but that al our covent
To preye for yow is ay so diligent,
And for to builden Cristes owene chirche.
Thomas! if ye wol lernen for to wirche,
Of buildinge up of chirches may ye finde
If it be good, in Thomas lyf of Inde.
Ye lye heer, ful of anger and of yre,
With which the devel set your herte a-fyre,
And chyden heer this sely innocent,
Your wyf, that is so meke and pacient.
And therfor, Thomas, trowe me if thee leste,
Ne stryve nat with thy wyf, as for thy beste;
And ber this word awey now, by thy feith,
Touchinge this thing, lo what the wyse seith:

"With-in thyn hous ne be thou no leoun ;
To thy subgits do noon oppressioun ;
Ne make thyne aqueyntances nat to flee."
And Thomas, yet eft-sones I charge thee,
Be war from hir that in thy bosom slepeth ;
War fro the serpent that so slyly crepeth
Under the gras, and stingeth subtilly.
Be war, my sone, and herkne paciently,
That twenty thousand men han lost hir lyves,
For stryving with hir lemmans and hir wyves.
Now sith ye han so holy and meke a wyf,
What nedeth yow, Thomas, to maken stryf?
Ther nis, y-wis, no serpent so cruel,
Whan man tret on his tayl, ne half so fel,
As woman is, whan she hath caught an ire ;
Vengeance is thanne al that they desyre.
Ire is a sinne, oon of the grete of sevene,
Abhominable un-to the god of hevene ;
And to him-self it is destruccion.
This every lewed viker or person
Can seye, how Ire engendreth homicyde.
Ire is, in sooth, executour of pryde.
I coude of Ire seye so muche sorwe,
My tale sholde laste til to-morwe.
And therfor preye I god bothe day and night,
An irous man, god sende him litel might!
It is greet harm and, certes, gret pitee,
To sette an irous man in heigh degree.
Whilom ther was an irous potestat,
As seith Senek, that, duringe his estaat,
Up-on a day out riden knightes two,
And as fortune wolde that it were so,
That oon of hem cam hoom, that other noght.
Anon the knight bifore the Iuge is brought,
That seyde thus, 'thou hast thy felawe slayn,
For which I deme thee to the deeth, certayn.'
And to another knight comanded he,
'Go lede him to the deeth, I charge thee.'
And happed, as they wente by the weye
Toward the place ther he sholde deye,
The knight cam, which men wenden had be deed.
Thanne thoughte they, it was the beste reed,
To lede hem bothe to the Iuge agayn.
They seiden, 'lord, the knight ne hath nat slayn
His felawe; here he standeth hool alyve.'
'Ye shul be deed,' quod he, 'so moot I thryve!
That is to seyn, bothe oon, and two, and three!'
And to the firste knight right thus spak he,
'I dampned thee, thou most algate be deed.
And thou also most nedes lese thyn heed,
For thou art cause why thy felawe deyth.'
And to the thridde knight right thus he seyth,
'Thou hast nat doon that I comanded thee.'
And thus he dide don sleen hem alle three.
Irous Cambyses was eek dronkelewe,
And ay delyted him to been a shrewe.
And so bifel, a lord of his meynee
That lovede vertuous moralitee,
Seyde on a day bitwix hem two right thus:
'A lord is lost, if he be vicious;
And dronkenesse is eek a foul record
Of any man, and namely in a lord.
Ther is ful many an eye and many an ere
Awaiting on a lord, and he noot where.
For goddes love, drink more attemprely;
Wyn waketh man to lesen wrecchedly
His minde, and eek his limes everichon.'
'The revers shaltou se,' quod he, 'anon;
And preve it, by thyn owene experience,
That wyn ne dooth to folk no swich offence.
Ther is no wyn bireveth me my might
Of hand ne foot, ne of myn eyen sight'—
And, for despyt, he drank ful muchel more
An hondred part than he had doon bifore;
And right anon, this irous cursed wrecche

Leet this knightes sone bifore him fecche,
Comandinge him he sholde bifore him stonde.
And sodeynly he took his bowe in honde,
And up the streng he pulled to his ere,
And with an arwe he slow the child right there:
'Now whether have I a siker hand or noon?'
Quod he, 'is al my might and minde agoon?
Hath wyn bireved me myn eyen sight?'
What sholde I telle thanswere of the knight?
His sone was slayn, ther is na-more to seye.
Beth war therfor with lordes how ye pleye.
Singeth *Placebo*, and I shal, if I can,
But if it be un-to a povre man.
To a povre man men sholde hise vyces telle,
But nat to a lord, thogh he sholde go to helle.
Lo irous Cirus, thilke Percien,
How he destroyed the river of Gysen,
For that an hors of his was dreynt therinne,
Whan that he wente Babiloigne to winne.
He made that the river was so smal,
That wommen mighte wade it over al.
Lo, what seyde he, that so wel teche can?
"Ne be no felawe to an irous man,
Ne with no wood man walke by the weye,
Lest thee repente;" ther is na-more to seye.
Now Thomas, leve brother, lef thyn ire;
Thou shalt me finde as lust as is a squire.
Hold nat the develes knyf ay at thyn herte;
Thyn angre dooth thee al to sore smerte;
But shewe to me al thy confessioun.'
'Nay,' quod the syke man, 'by Seint Simoun!
I have be shriven this day at my curat;
I have him told al hoolly myn estat;
Nedeth na-more to speke of it,' seith he,
'But if me list of myn humilitee.'
'Yif me thanne of thy gold, to make our cloistre,'
Quod he, 'for many a muscle and many an oistre,
Whan other men han ben ful wel at eyse,
Hath been our fode, our cloistre for to reyse.
And yet, god woot, unnethe the fundement
Parfourned is, ne of our pavement
Nis nat a tyle yet with-inne our wones;
By god, we owen fourty pound for stones!
Now help, Thomas, for him that harwed helle!
For elles moste we are bokes selle.
And if ye lakke our predicacioun,
Than gooth the world al to destruccioun.
For who-so wolde us fro this world bireve,
So god me save, Thomas, by your leve,
He wolde bireve out of this world the sonne.
For who can teche and werchen as we conne?
And that is nat of litel tyme,' quod he;
'But sith that Elie was, or Elisee,
Han freres been, that finde I of record,
In charitee, y-thanked be our lord.
Now Thomas, help, for seinte charitee!'
And doun anon he sette him on his knee.
This syke man wex wel ny wood for ire;
He wolde that the frere had been on-fire
With his false dissimulacioun.
'Swich thing as is in my possessioun,'
Quod he, 'that may I yeven, and non other.
Ye sey me thus, how that I am your brother?'
'Ye, certes,' quod the frere, 'trusteth weel;
I took our dame our lettre with our seel.'
'Now wel,' quod he, 'and som-what shal I yive
Un-to your holy covent whyl I live,
And in thyn hand thou shalt it have anoon;
On this condicioun, and other noon,
That thou departe it so, my dere brother,
That every frere have also muche as other.
This shaltou swere on thy professioun,
With-outen fraude or cavillacioun.'
'I swere it,' quod this frere, 'upon my feith!'
And ther-with-al his hand in his he leith:

'Lo, heer my feith! in me shal be no lak.'
'Now thanne, put thyn hand doun by my bak,' 2140
Seyde this man, 'and grope wel bihinde;
Bynethe my buttok ther shaltow finde
A thing that I have hid in privetee.'
'A!' thoghte this frere, 'this shal go with me!'
And doun his hand he launcheth to the clifte, 2145
In hope for to finde ther a yifte.
And whan this syke man felte this frere
Aboute his tuwel grope there and here,
Amidde his hand he leet the frere a fart.
Ther nis no capul, drawinge in a cart, 2150
That mighte have lete a fart of swich a soun.
'The frere up stirte as doth a wood leoun:
'A! false cherl,' quod he, 'for goddes bones,
This hastow for despyt doon, for the nones!
Thou shalt abye this fart, if that I may!'
His meynee, whiche that herden this affray, 2156
Cam lepinge in, and chaced out the frere;
And forth he gooth, with a ful angry chere,
And fette his felawe, ther-as lay his stoor.
He looked as it were a wilde boor; 2160
He grinte with his teeth, so was he wrooth.
A sturdy pas doun to the court he gooth,
Wher-as ther woned a man of greet honour,
To whom that he was alwey confessour;
This worthy man was lord of that village.
This frere cam, as he were in a rage, 2166
Wher-as this lord sat eting at his bord.
Unnethes mighte the frere speke a word,
Til atte laste he seyde: 'god yow see!'
This lord gan loke, and seide, '*benedicite!* 2170
What, frere Iohn, what maner world is this?
I see wel that som thing ther is amis.
Ye loken as the wode were ful of thevis,
Sit doun anon, and tel me what your greef is,
And it shal be amended, if I may.' 2175
'I have,' quod he, 'had a despyt this day,
God yelde yow! adoun in your village,
That in this world is noon so povre a page,
That he nolde have abhominacioun 2179
Of that I have receyved in your toun.
And yet ne greveth me no-thing so sore,
As that this olde cherl, with lokkes hore,
Blasphemed hath our holy covent eke.'
'Now, maister,' quod this lord, 'I yow biseke.'
'No maister, sire,' quod he, 'but servitour, 2185
Thogh I have had in scole swich honour.
God lyketh nat that "Raby" men us calle,
Neither in market ne in your large halle.'
'No fors,' quod he, 'but tel me al your grief.'
'Sire,' quod this frere, 'an odious meschief 2190
This day bitid is to myn ordre and me,
And so *per consequens* to ech degree
Of holy chirche, god amende it sone!'
'Sir,' quod the lord, 'ye woot what is to done.
Distempre yow noght, ye be my confessour; 2195
Ye been the salt of the erthe and the savour.
For goddes love your pacience ye holde;
Tel me your grief: and be anon him tolde,
As ye han herd biforn, ye woot wel what.
The lady of the hous ay stille sat, 2200
Til she had herd al what the frere sayde:
'Ey, goddes moder,' quod she, 'blisful mayde!
Is ther oght elles? telle me feithfully.'
'Madame,' quod he, 'how thinketh yow her-by?'
'How that me thinketh?' quod she; 'so god me speede, 2205
I seye, a cherl hath doon a cherles dede.
What shold I seye? god lat him never thee!
His syke heed is ful of vanitee,
I hold him in a maner frenesye.'
'Madame,' quod he, 'by god I shal nat lye; 2210
But I on other weyes may be wreke,
I shal diffame him over-al ther I speke,

This false blasphemour, that charged me
To parte that wol nat departed be,
To every man y-liche, with meschaunce!'
The lord sat stille as he were in a traunce,
And in his herte he rolled up and doun,
'How hadde this cherl imaginacioun
To shewe swich a probleme to the frere?
Never erst er now herde I of swich matere;
I trowe the devel putte it in his minde.
In ars-metryke shal ther no man finde,
Biforn this day, of swich a questioun.
Who sholde make a demonstracioun,
That every man sholde have y-liche his part
As of the soun or savour of a fart?
O nyce proude cherl, I shrewe his face!
'Lo, sires,' quod the lord, with harde grace,
'Who ever herde of swich a thing er now?
To every man y-lyke? tel me how?
It is an inpossible, it may nat be!
Ey, nyce cherl, god lete him never thee!
The rumblinge of a fart, and every soun,
Nis but of eir reverberacioun,
And ever it wasteth lyte and lyte awey.
Ther is no man can demen, by my fey,
If that it were departed equally.
What, lo, my cherl, lo, yet how shrewedly
Un-to my confessour to-day he spak!
I holde him certeyn a demoniak!
Now ete your mete, and lat the cherl go pleye,
Lat him go honge himself, a devel weye!'
Now stood the lordes squyer at the bord,
That carf his mete, and herde, word by word,
Of alle thinges of which I have yow sayd.
'My lord,' quod he, 'be ye nat yvel apayd;
I coude telle, for a goune-clooth,
To yow, sir frere, so ye be nat wrooth,
How that this fart sholde even deled be
Among your covent, if it lyked me.'
'Tel,' quod the lord, 'and thou shalt have anon
A goune-cloth, by god and by Seint Iohn!'
'My lord,' quod he, 'whan that the weder is fair,
With-outen wind or perturbinge of air,
Lat bringe a cartwheel here in-to this halle,
But loke that it have his spokes alle.
Twelf spokes hath a cartwheel comunly.
And bring me than twelf freres, woot ye why?
For thrittene is a covent, as I gesse.
The confessour heer, for his worthinesse,
Shal parfourne up the nombre of his covent.
Than shal they knele doun, by oon assent,
And to every spokes ende, in this manere,
Ful sadly leye his nose shal a frere.
Your noble confessour, ther god him save,
Shal holde his nose upright, under the nave.
Than shal this cherl, with bely stif and toght
As any tabour, hider been y-broght;
And sette him on the wheel right of this cart,
Upon the nave, and make him lete a fart.
And ye shul seen, up peril of my lyf,
By preve which that is demonstratif,
That equally the soun of it wol wende,
And eek the stink, un-to the spokes ende;
Save that this worthy man, your confessour,
By-cause he is a man of greet honour,
Shal have the firste fruit, as reson is;
The noble usage of freres yet is this,
The worthy men of him shul first be served;
And certeinly, he hath it weel deserved.
He hath to-day taught us so muchel good
With preching in the pulpit ther he stood,
That I may vouche-sauf, I sey for me,
He hadde the firste smel of fartes three,
And so wolde al his covent hardily;
He bereth him so faire and holily.'
The lord, the lady, and ech man, save the frere,
Seyde that Iankin spak, in this matere,

As wel as Euclide or [as] Ptholomee.
Touchinge this cherl, they seyde, subtiltee 2290
And heigh wit made him speken as he spak;
He nis no fool, ne no demoniak.
And Iankin hath y-wonne a newe goune. —
My tale is doon; we been almost at toune. 2294

Here endeth the Somnours Tale.

GROUP E.

THE CLERK'S PROLOGUE.

Here folweth the Prologe of the Clerkes Tale of Oxenford.

'Sir clerk of Oxenford,' our hoste sayde,
'Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a mayde,
Were newe spoused, sitting at the bord;
This day ne herde I of your tonge a word.
I trowe ye studie aboute som sophyme, 5
But Salomon seith, "every thing hath tyme."
For goddes sake, as beth of bettre chere,
It is no tyme for to studien here.
Telle us som mery tale, by your fey;
For what man that is entred in a pley, 10
He nedes moot unto the pley assente.
But precheth nat, as freres doon in Lente,
To make us for our olde sinnes wepe,
Ne that thy tale make us nat to slepe.
Telle us som mery thing of aventures; — 15
Your termes, your colours, and your figures,
Keepe hem in stoor til so be ye endyte
Heigh style, as whan that men to kinges wryte.
Speketh so pleyn at this tyme, I yow preye,
That we may understonde what ye seye.' 20
This worthy clerk benignely answerde,
'Hoste,' quod he, 'I am under your yerde;
Ye han of us as now the governaunce,
And therfor wol I do yow obeisaunce,
As fer as reson axeth, hardily. 25
I wol yow telle a tale which that I
Lerned at Padowe of a worthy clerk,
As preved by his wordes and his werk.
He is now deed and nayled in his cheste,
I prey to god so yeve his soule reste! 30
Fraunceys Petrark, the laureat poete,
Highte this clerk, whos rethoryke sweete
Enlumined al Itaille of poetrye,
As Linian dide of philosophye
Or lawe, or other art particuler; 35
But deeth, that wol nat suffre us dwellen heer
But as it were a twinkling of an yë,
Hem bothe hath slayn, and alle shul we dyë.
But forth to tellen of this worthy man,
That taught me this tale, as I bigan, 40
I seye that first with heigh style he endyteth,
Er he the body of his tale wryteth,
A proheme, in the which discryveth he
Pemond, and of Saluces the contree,
And speketh of Apennyn, the hilles hye, 45
That been the boundes of West Lumbardye,
And of Mount Vesulus in special,
Where as the Poo, out of a welle smal,
Taketh his firste springing and his sours,
That estward ay encresseth in his cours 50
To Emelward, to Ferrare, and Venyse:
The which a long thing were to devyse.
And trewely, as to my Iugement,
Me thinketh it a thing impertinent,
Save that he wol conveyen his matere: 55
But this his tale, which that ye may here.'

THE CLERKES TALE.

Here biginneth the Tale of the Clerk of Oxenford.

THER is, at the west syde of Itaille,
Doun at the rote of Vesulus the colde,
A lusty playne, habundant of vitaille,
Wher many a tour and toun thou mayst biholde,
That founded were in tyme of fadres olde,
And many another delitable sighte,
And Saluces this noble contree highte.

A markis whylom lord was of that londe,
As were his worthy eldres him bifore;
And obeisant and redy to his honde
Were alle his liges, bothe lasse and more.
Thus in delyt he liveth, and hath don yore,
Biloved and drad, thurgh favour of fortune,
Bothe of his lordes and of his commune.

Therwith he was, to speke as of linage,
The gentilleste y-born of Lumbardye,
A fair persone, and strong, and yong of age,
And ful of honour and of curteisye;
Discreet y-nogh his contree for to gye,
Save in somme thinges that he was to blame,
And Walter was this yonge lordes name.

I blame him thus, that he considereth noght
In tyme cominge what mighte him bityde,
But on his lust present was al his thoght,
As for to hauke and hunte on every syde;
Wel ny alle othere cures leet he slyde,
And eek he nolde, and that was worst of alle,
Wedde no wyf, for noght that may bifalle.

Only that point his peple bar so sore,
That flokmele on a day they to him wente,
And oon of hem, that wysest was of lore,
Or elles that the lord best wolde assente
That he sholde telle him what his peple mente,
Or elles coude he shewe wel swich matere,
He to the markis seyde as ye shul here.

'O noble markis, your humanitee
Assureth us and yeveth us hardinesse,
As ofte as tyme is of necessitee
That we to yow mowe telle our hevinesse;
Accepteth, lord, now for your gentillesse,
That we with pitous herte un-to yow pleyne,
And lete your eres nat my voys disdeyne.

Al have I noght to done in this matere
More than another man hath in this place,
Yet for as muche as ye, my lord so dere,
Han alwey shewed me favour and grace,
I dar the better aske of yow a space
Of audience, to shewen our requeste,
And ye, my lord, to doon right as yow leste.

For certes, lord, so wel us lyketh yow
And al your werk and ever han doon, that we
Ne coude nat us self devysen how
We mighte liven in more felicitee,
Save o thing, lord, if it your wille be,
That for to been a wedded man yow leste,
Than were your peple in sovereyn hertes reste.

Boweth your nekke under that blisful yok
Of soveraynetee, noght of servyse,
Which that men clepeth spousaille or wedlok;
And thenketh, lord, among your thoghtes wyse,
How that our dayes passe in sondry wyse;
For though we slepe or wake, or rome, or ryde,
Ay fleeth the tyme, it nil no man abyde.

And though your grene youthe floure as yit,
In crepeth age alwey, as stille as stoon,
And deeth manaceth every age, and smit
In ech estaat, for ther escapeth noon:
And al so certein as we knowe echoon
That we shul deye, as uncerteyn we alle

Been of that day whan deeth shal on us falle.

Accepteth than of us the trewe entente,
That never yet refuseden your heste,
And we wol, lord, if that ye wol assente,
Chese yow a wyf in short tyme, atte leste,
Born of the gentilleste and of the meste
Of al this lond, so that it oghte seme
Honour to god and yow, as we can deme.

Deliver us out of al this bisy drede,
And tak a wyf, for hye goddes sake;
For if it so bifelle, as god forbede,
That thurgh your deeth your linage sholde slake,
And that a straunge successour sholde take
Your heritage, o! wo were us alyve!
Wherfor we pray you hastily to wyve.'

Hir meke preyere and hir pitous chere
Made the markis herte han pitee.
'Ye wol,' quod he, 'myn owene peple dere,
To that I never erst thoghte streyne me.
I me reioysed of my libertee,
That selde tyme is founde in mariage;
Ther I was free, I moot been in servage.

But nathelees I see your trewe entente,
And truste upon your wit, and have don ay;
Wherfor of my free wil I wol assente
To wedde me, as sone as ever I may.
But ther-as ye han profred me to-day
To chese me a wyf, I yow relesse
That choys, and prey yow of that profre cesse.

For god it woot, that children ofte been
Unlyk her worthy eldres hem bifore;
Bountee comth al of god, nat of the streen
Of which they been engendred and y-bore;
I truste in goddes bountee, and therfore
My mariage and myn estaat and reste
I him bitake; he may don as him leste.

Lat me alone in chesinge of my wyf,
That charge up-on my bak I wol endure;
But I yow preye, and charge up-on your lyf,
That what wyf that I take, ye me assure
To worshipe hir, whyl that hir lyf may dure,
In word and werk, bothe here and everywhere,
As she an emperoures doghter were.

And forthermore, this shal ye swere, that ye
Agayn my choys shul neither grucche ne stryve;
For sith I shal forgoon my libertee
At your requeste, as ever moot I thryve,
Ther as myn herte is set, ther wol I wyve;
And but ye wole assente in swich manere,
I prey yow, speketh na-more of this matere.'

With hertly wil they sworen, and assenten
To al this thing, ther seyde no wight nay;
Bisekinge him of grace, er that they wenten,
That he wolde graunten hem a certein day
Of his spousaille, as sone as ever he may;
For yet alwey the peple som-what dredde
Lest that this markis no wyf wolde wedde.

He graunted hem a day, swich as him leste,
On which he wolde be wedded sikerly,
And seyde, he dide al this at hir requeste;
And they, with humble entente, buxomly,
Knelinge up-on her knees ful reverently
Him thanken alle, and thus they han an ende
Of hir entente, and hoom agayn they wende.

And heer-up-on he to his officeres
Comaundeth for the feste to purveye,
And to his privee knightes and squyeres
Swich charge yaf, as him liste on hem leye;
And they to his comandement obeye,
And ech of hem doth al his diligence
To doon un-to the feste reverence.

Explicit prima pars.

Incipit secunda pars.

Noght fer fro thilke paleys honurable
Ther-as this markis shoop his mariage,
Ther stood a throp, of site delitable,
In which that povre folk of that village
Hadden hir bestes and hir herbergage,
And of hir labour took hir sustenance
After that the erthe yaf hem habundance.

Amonges thise povre folk ther dwelte a man
Which that was holden povrest of hem alle;
But hye god som tyme senden can
His grace in-to a litel oxes stalle:
Ianicula men of that throp him calle.
A doghter hadde he, fair y-nogh to sighte,
And Grisildis this yonge mayden highte.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee,
Than was she oon the faireste under sonne;
For povreliche y-fostred up was she,
No likerous lust was thurgh hir herte y-ronne;
Wel ofter of the welle than of the tonne
She drank, and for she wolde vertu plese,
She knew wel labour, but non ydel ese.

But thogh this mayde tendre were of age,
Yet in the brest of hir virginitee
Ther was enclosed rype and sad corage;
And in greet reverence and charitee
Hir olde povre fader fostred she;
A fewe sheep spinning on feeld she kepte,
She wolde noght been ydel til she slepte.

And whan she hoomward cam, she wolde bringe
Wortes or othere herbes tymes ofte,
The whiche she shredde and seeth for hir livinge,
And made hir bed ful harde and no-thing softe;
And ay she kepte hir fadres lyf on-lofte
With everich obeisaunce and diligence
That child may doon to fadres reverence.

Up-on Grisilde, this povre creature,
Ful ofte sythe this markis sette his yë
As he on hunting rood paraventure;
And whan it fil that he mighte hir espye,
He noght with wantoun loking of folye
His yën caste on hir, but in sad wyse
Up-on hir chere he wolde him ofte avyse,

Commending in his herte hir wommanhede,
And eek hir vertu, passing any wight
Of so yong age, as wel in chere as dede.
For thogh the peple have no greet insight
In vertu, he considered ful right
Hir bountee, and disposed that he wolde
Wedde hir only, if ever he wedde sholde.

The day of wedding cam, but no wight can
Telle what womman that it sholde be;
For which merveille wondred many a man,
And seyden, whan they were in privetee,
'Wol nat our lord yet leve his vanitee?
Wol he nat wedde? allas, allas the whyle!
Why wol he thus him-self and us bigyle?'

But natheles this markis hath don make
Of gemmes, set in gold and in asure,
Broches and ringes, for Grisildis sake,
And of hir clothing took he the mesure
By a mayde, lyk to hir stature,
And eek of othere ornamentes alle
That un-to swich a wedding sholde falle.

The tyme of undern of the same day
Approcheth, that this wedding sholde be;
And al the paleys put was in array,
Bothe halle and chambres, ech in his degree;
Houses of office stuffed with plentee
Ther maystow seen of deyntevous vitaille,
That may be founde, as fer as last Itaille.

This royal markis, richely arrayed,
Lordes and ladyes in his companye,
The whiche unto the feste were y-prayed,
And of his retenue the bachelrye,
With many a soun of sondry melodye,
Un-to the village, of the which I tolde,
In this array the righte wey han holde.

Grisilde of this, god woot, ful innocent,
That for hir shapen was al this array,

To fecchen water at a welle is went,
And cometh hoom as sone as ever she may.
For wel she hadde herd seyd, that thilke day
The markis sholde wedde, and, if she mighte,
She wolde fayn han seyn som of that sighte.

She thoghte, 'I wol with othere maydens stonde,
That been my felawes, in our dore, and see
The markisesse, and therfor wol I fonde
To doon at hoom, as sone as it may be,
The labour which that longeth un-to me;
And then I may at leyser hir biholde,
If she this wey un-to the castel holde.'

And as she wolde over hir threshfold goon,
The markis cam and gan hir for to calle;
And she sette doun hir water-pot anoon
Bisyde the threshfold, in an oxes stalle,
And doun up-on hir knees she gan to falle,
And with sad contenance kneleth stille
Til she had herd what was the lordes wille.

This thoghtful markis spak un-to this mayde
Ful sobrely, and seyde in this manere,
'Wher is your fader, Grisildis?' he sayde,
And she with reverence, in humble chere,
Answerde, 'lord, he is al redy here.'
And in she gooth with-outen lenger lette,
And to the markis she her fader fette.

He by the hond than took this olde man,
And seyde thus, whan he him hadde asyde,
'Ianicula, I neither may ne can
Lenger the plesance of myn herte hyde.
If that thou vouche-sauf, what-so bityde,
Thy doghter wol I take, er that I wende,
As for my wyf, un-to hir lyves ende.

Thou lovest me, I woot it wel, certeyn,
And art my feithful lige man y-bore;
And al that lyketh me, I dar wel seyn
It lyketh thee, and specially therfore
Tel me that poynt that I have seyd bifore,
If that thou wolt un-to that purpos drawe,
To take me as for thy sone-in-lawe?'

This sodeyn cas this man astoned so,
That reed he wex, abayst, and al quaking
He stood; unnethes seyde he wordes mo,
But only thus: 'lord,' quod he, 'my willing
Is as ye wole, ne ayeines your lyking
I wol no-thing; ye be my lord so dere;
Right as yow lust governeth this matere.'

'Yet wol I,' quod this markis softely,
'That in thy chambre I and thou and she
Have a collacion, and wostow why?
For I wol axe if it hir wille be
To be my wyf, and reule hir after me;
And al this shal be doon in thy presence,
I wol noght speke out of thyn audience.'

And in the chambre whyl they were aboute
Hir tretis, which as ye shal after here,
The peple cam un-to the hous without,
And wondred hem in how honest manere
And tentifly she kepte hir fader dere.
But outerly Grisildis wondre mighte,
For never erst ne saugh she swich a sighte.

No wonder is thogh that she were astoned
To seen so greet a gest come in that place;
She never was to swiche gestes woned,
For which she loked with ful pale face.
But shortly forth this tale for to chace,
Thise arn the wordes that the markis sayde
To this benigne verray feithful mayde.

'Grisilde,' he seyde, 'ye shul wel understonde
It lyketh to your fader and to me
That I yow wedde, and eek it may so stonde,
As I suppose, ye wol that it so be.
But thise demandes axe I first,' quod he,
'That, sith it shal be doon in hastif wyse,
Wol ye assente, or elles yow avyse?

I seye this, be ye redy with good herte
To al my lust, and that I frely may,

As me best thinketh, do yow laughe or smerte,
And never ye to grucche it, night ne day ?
And eek whan I sey "ye," ne sey nat "nay,"
Neither by word ne frowning contenance;
Swer this, and here I swere our alliance.'

Wondring upon this word, quaking for drede,
She seyde, 'lord, undigne and unworthy
Am I to thilke honour that ye me bede;
But as ye wol your-self, right so wol I.
And heer I swere that never willingly
In werk ne thoght I nil yow disobeye,
For to be deed, though me were looth to deye.'

'This is y-nogh, Grisilde myn !' quod he.
And forth he gooth with a ful sobre chere
Out at the dore, and after that cam she,
And to the peple he seyde in this manere,
'This is my wyf,' quod he, 'that standeth here.
Honoureth hir, and loveth hir, I preye,
Who-so me loveth; ther is na-more to seye.'

And for that no-thing of hir olde gere
She sholde bringe in-to his hous, he bad
That wommen sholde dispoilen hir right there;
Of which thise ladyes were nat right glad
To handle hir clothes wher-in she was clad.
But natheles this mayde bright of hewe
Fro foot to heed they clothed han al newe.

Hir heres han they kembd, that lay untressed
Ful rudely, and with hir fingres smale
A corone on hir heed they han y-dressed,
And sette hir ful of nowches grete and smale;
Of hir array what sholde I make a tale ?
Unnethe the peple hir knew for hir fairnesse,
Whan she translated was in swich richesse.

This markis hath hir spoused with a ring
Broght for the same cause, and than hir sette
Up-on an hors, snow-whyt and wel ambling,
And to his paleys, er he lenger lette,
With Ioyful peple that hir ladde and mette,
Conveyed hir, and thus the day they spende
In revel, til the sonne gan descende.

And shortly forth this tale for to chace,
I seye that to this newe markisesse
God hath swich favour sent hir of his grace,
That it ne semed nat by lyklinesse
That she was born and fed in rudenesse,
As in a cote or in an oxe-stalle,
But norished in an emperoures halle.

To every wight she woxen is so dere
And worshipful, that folk ther she was bore
And from hir birthe knewe hir yeer by yere,
Unnethe trowed they, but dorste han swore
That to Ianicle, of which I spak bifore,
She doghter nas, for, as by coniecture,
Hem thoughte she was another creature.

For thogh that ever vertuous was she,
She was encressed in swich excellence
Of thewes gode, y-set in heigh bountee,
And so discreet and fair of eloquence,
So benigne and so digne of reverence,
And coude so the peples herte embrace,
That ech hir lovede that loked on hir face.

Noght only of Saluces in the toun
Publiced was the bountee of hir name,
But eek bisyde in many a regioun,
If oon seyde wel, another seyde the same;
So spradde of hir heigh bountee the fame,
That men and wommen, as wel yonge as olde,
Gon to Saluce, upon hir to biholde.

Thus Walter lowly, nay but royally,
Wedded with fortunat honestetee,

In goddes pees liveth ful esily
At hoom, and outward grace y-nogh had he;
And for he saugh that under low degree
Was ofte vertu hid, the peple him helde
A prudent man, and that is seyn ful selde.

Nat only this Grisildis thurgh hir wit
Coude al the feet of wyfly hoomlinesse,
But eek, whan that the cas requyred it,
The commune profit coude she redresse.
Ther nas discord, rancour, ne hevinesse
In al that lond, that she ne coude apese,
And wysly bringe hem alle in reste and ese.

Though that hir housbonde absent were anoon,
If gentil men, or othere of hir contree
Were wrothe, she wolde bringen hem atoon;
So wyse and rype wordes hadde she,
And tugements of so greet equitee,
That she from heven sent was as men wende,
Peple to save and every wrong tamende.

Nat longe tyme after that this Grisild
Was wedded, she a doughter hath y-bore,
Al had hir lever have born a knave child.
Glad was this markis and the folk therfore;
For though a mayde child come al bifore,
She may unto a knave child atteyne
By lyklihed, sin she nis nat bareyne.

Explicit secunda pars.

Incipit tercia pars.

Ther fil, as it bifalleth tymes mo,
Whan that this child had souked but a throwe,
This markis in his herte longeth so
To tempte his wyf, hir sadnesse for to knowe,
That he ne mighte out of his herte throwe
This merveillous desyr, his wyf tassaye,
Needless, god woot, he thoughte hir for taffraye.

He hadde assayed hir y-nogh bifore,
And fond hir ever good; what neded it
Hir for to tempte and alwey more and more?
Though som men preise it for a subtil wit,
But as for me, I seye that yvel it sit
Tassaye a wyf whan that it is no nede,
And putten her in anguish and in drede.

For which this markis wroghte in this manere;
He cam alone a-night, ther as she lay,
With sterne face and with ful trouble chere,
And seyde thus, 'Grisild,' quod he, 'that day
That I yow took out of your povre array,
And putte yow in estaat of heigh noblesse,
Ye have nat that forgeten, as I gesse.

I seye, Grisild, this present dignitee,
In which that I have put yow, as I trowe,
Maketh yow nat foryetful for to be
That I yow took in povre estaat ful lowe
For any wele ye moot your-selven knowe.
Tak hede of every word that I yow seye,
Ther is no wight that hereth it but we tweye.

Ye woot your-self wel, how that ye cam here
In-to this hous, it is nat longe ago,
And though to me that ye be lief and dere,
Un-to my gentils ye be no-thing so;
They seyn, to hem it is greet shame and wo
For to be subgets and ben in servage
To thee, that born art of a smal village.

And namely, sith thy doghter was y-bore,
Thise wordes han they spoken doutelees;
But I desyre, as I have doon bifore,
To live my lyf with hem in reste and pees;
I may nat in this caas be recchelees.
I moot don with thy doghter for the beste,
Nat as I wolde, but as my peple leste.

And yet, god wot, this is ful looth to me;
But nathelees with-oute your witing
I wol nat doon, but this wol I,' quod he,
'That ye to me assente as in this thing.
Shewe now your pacience in your werking
That ye me highte and swore in your village
That day that maked was our mariage.'

Whan she had herd al this, she noght ameved
Neither in word, or chere, or countenaunce;
For, as it semed, she was nat agreved:
She seyde, 'lord, al lyth in your plesaunce,
My child and I with hertly obeisaunce
Ben youres al, and ye mowe save or spille
Your owene thing; werketh after your wille.

Ther may no-thing, god so my soule save,
Lyken to yow that may displese me;
Ne I desyre no-thing for to have,
Ne drede for to lese, save only ye;
This wil is in myn herte and ay shal be.
No lengthe of tyme or deeth may this deface,
Ne chaunge my corage to another place.'

Glad was this markis of hir answering,
But yet he feyned as he were nat so;
Al drery was his chere and his loking
Whan that he sholde out of the chambre go.
Sone after this, a furlong wey or two,
He prively hath told al his entente
Un-to a man, and to his wyf him sente.

A maner sergeant was this privee man,
The which that feithful ofte he founden hadde
In thinges grete, and eek swich folk wel can
Don execucioun on thinges badde.
The lord knew wel that he him loved and dradde;
And whan this sergeant wiste his lordes wille
In-to the chambre he stalked him ful stille.

'Madame,' he seyde, 'ye mote foryeve it me,
Thogh I do thing to which I am constreyned;
Ye ben so wys that ful wel knowe ye
That lordes hestes mowe nat been y-feyned;
They mowe wel been biwailled or compleyned,
But men mot nede un-to her lust obeye,
And so wol I; ther is na-more to seye.

This child I am comanded for to take'—
And spak na-more, but out the child he hente
Despitously, and gan a chere make
As though he wolde han slayn it er he wente.
Grisildis mot al suffren and consente;
And as a lamb she sitteth meke and stille,
And leet this cruel sergeant doon his wille.

Suspecious was the diffame of this man,
Suspect his face, suspect his word also;
Suspect the tyme in which he this bigan.
Allas! hir doghter that she lovede so
She wende he wolde han slawen it right tho.
But natheles she neither weep ne syked
Consenting hir to that the markis lyked.

But atte laste speken she bigan,
And mekely she to the sergeant preyde,
So as he was a worthy gentil man,
That she moste kisse hir child er that it deyde;
And in her barm this litel child she leyde
With ful sad face, and gan the child to kisse
And lulled it, and after gan it blisse.

And thus she seyde in hir benigne voys,
'Far weel, my child; I shall thee never see;
But, sith I thee have marked with the croys,

Of thilke fader blessed mote thou be,
That for us deyde up-on a croys of tree.
Thy soule, litel child, I him bitake,
For this night shaltow dyen for my sake.'

I trowe that to a norice in this cas
It had ben hard this rewthe for to se;
Wel mighte a mooder than han cryed 'allas!'
But nathelees so sad stedfast was she,
That she endured all adversitee,
And to the sergeant meekly she sayde,
'Have heer agayn your litel yonge mayde.

Goth now,' quod she, 'and dooth my lordes heste,
But o thing wol I preye yow of your grace,
That, but my lord forbad yow, atte leste
Burieth this litel body in som place
That bestes ne no briddes it to-race.'
But he no word wol to that purpos seye,
But took the child and wente upon his weye.

This sergeant cam un-to his lord ageyn,
And of Grisildis wordes and hir chere
He tolde him point for point, in short and playn,
And him presenteth with his doghter dere.
Somwhat this lord hath rewthe in his manere;
But nathelees his purpos heeld he stille,
As lordes doon, whan they wol han hir wille;

And bad his sergeant that he prively
Sholde this child ful softe winde and wrappe
With alle circumstances tendrely,
And carie it in a cofre or in a lappe;
But, up-on peyne his heed of for to swappe,
That no man sholde knowe of his entente,
Ne whenne he cam, ne whider that he wente;

But at Boloigne to his suster dere,
That thilke tyme of Panik was countesse,
He sholde it take, and shewe hir this matere,
Bisekinge hir to don hir bisinesse
This child to fostre in alle gentilesse;
And whos child that it was he bad hir hyde
From every wight, for oght that may bityde.

The sergeant gooth, and hath fulfild this thing;
But to this markis now retourne we;
For now goth he ful faste imagining
If by his wyves chere he mighte see,
Or by hir word aperceyve that she
Were chaunged; but he never hir coude finde
But ever in oon y-lyke sad and kinde.

As glad, as humble, as bisy in servyse,
And eek in love as she was wont to be,
Was she to him in every maner wyse;
Ne of hir doghter noght a word spak she.
Non accident for noon adversitee
Was seyn in hir, ne never hir doghter name
Ne nempned she, in ernest nor in game.

Explicit tercia pars. Sequitur pars quarta.

In this estaat ther passed been foure yeer
Er she with childe was; but, as god wolde,
A knave child she bar by this Walter,
Ful gracious and fair for to biholde.
And whan that folk it to his fader tolde,
Nat only he, but al his contree, merie
Was for this child, and god they thanke and herie.

Whan it was two yeer old, and fro the brest
Departed of his norice, on a day
This markis caughte yet another lest
To tempte his wyf yet ofter, if he may.
O needles was she tempted in assay!
But wedded men ne knowe no mesure,
Whan that they finde a pacient creature.

'Wyf,' quod this markis, 'ye han herd er this,

My peple sikly berth our mariage
And namely, sith my sone y-boren is,
Now is it worse than ever in al our age.
The murmur sleeth myn herte and my corage;
For to myne eres comth the voys so smerte,
That it wel ny destroyed hath myn herte.

Now sey they thus, "whan Walter is agoon,
Then shal the blood of Ianicle succede
And been our lord, for other have we noon;'
Swiche wordes seith my peple, out of drede.
Wel oughte I of swich murmur taken hede;
For certeinly I drede swich sentence,
Though they nat pleyn speke in myn audience.

I wolde live in pees, if that I mighte;
Wherfor I am disposed outerly,
As I his suster served by nighte,
Right so thenke I to serve him prively;
This warne I yow, that ye nat sodeynly
Out of your-self for no wo sholde outraye;
Beth pacient, and ther-of I yow preye.'

'I have,' quod she, 'seyd thus, and ever shal,
I wol no thing, ne nil no thing, certayn,
But as yow list; noght greveth me at al,
Thogh that my doghter and my sone be slayn,
At your comandement, this is to sayn.
I have noght had no part of children tweyne
But first siknesse, and after wo and peyne.

Ye been our lord, doth with your owene thing
Right as yow list; axeth no reed at me.
For, as I lefte at hoom al my clothing,
Whan I first cam to yow, right so,' quod she,
'Left I my wil and al my libertee,
And took your clothing; wherfor I yow preye,
Doth your plesaunce, I wol your lust obeye.

And certes, if I hadde prescience
Your wil to knowe er ye your lust me telde,
I wolde it doon with-outen necligence;
But now I woot your lust and what ye wolde,
Al your plesaunce ferme and stable I holde;
For wiste I that my deeth wolde do yow ese,
Right gladly wolde I dyen, yow to plese.

Deth may noght make no comparisoun
Un-to your love:' and, whan this markis sey
The constance of his wyf, he caste adoun
His yën two, and wondreth that she may
In pacience suffre al this array.
And forth he gooth with drery contenaunce,
But to his herte it was ful greet plesaunce.

This ugly sergeant, in the same wyse
That he hir doghter caughte, right so he,
Or worse, if men worse can devyse,
Hath hent hir sone, that ful was of beautee.
And ever in oon so pacient was she,
That she no chere made of hevinesse,
But kiste hir sone, and after gan it blesse;

Save this; she preyed him that, if he mighte,
Hir litel sone he wolde in erthe grave,
His tendre limes, delicat to sighte,
Fro foules and fro bestes for to save.
But she non answer of him might have.
He wente his wey, as him no-thing ne roghte;
But to Bolloigne he tendrely it broghte.

This markis wondreth ever lenger the more
Up-on hir pacience, and if that he

Ne hadde soothly knowen ther-bifore,
That parfitly hir children lovede she,
He wolde have wend that of som subtiltee,
And of malice or for cruel corage,
That she had suffred this with sad visage.

But wel he knew that next him-self, certayn,
She loved hir children best in every wyse.
But now of wommen wolde I axen fayn,
If thise assayes mighte nat suffyse?
What coude a sturdy housbond more devyse
To preve hir wyfhod and hir stedfastnesse,
And he continuing ever in sturdinesse?

But ther ben folk of swich condicioun,
That, whan they have a certein purpos take,
They can nat stinte of hir entencioun,
But, right as they were bounden to a stake,
They wol nat of that firste purpos slake.
Right so this markis fulliche hath purposed
To tempte his wyf, as he was first disposed.

He waiteth, if by word or contenance
That she to him was changed of corage;
But never coude he finde variance;
She was ay oon in herte and in visage;
And ay the forther that she was in age,
The more trewe, if that it were possible,
She was to him in love, and more penible.

For which it semed thus, that of hem two
Ther nas but o wil; for, as Walter leste,
The same lust was hir plesance also,
And, god be thanked, al fil for the beste.
She shewed wel, for no worldly unreste
A wyf, as of hir-self, no-thing ne sholde
Wille in effect, but as hir housbond wolde.

The sclaundre of Walter ofte and wyde spradde,
That of a cruel herte he wikkedly,
For he a povre womman wedded hadde,
Hath mordred bothe his children prively.
Swich murmur was among hem comunly.
No wonder is, for to the peples ere
Ther cam no word but that they mordred were.

For which, wher-as his peple ther-bifore
Had loved him wel, the sclaundre of his diffame
Made hem that they him hatede therfore;
To been a mordrer is an hateful name.
But natheles, for ernest ne for game
He of his cruel purpos nolde stente;
To tempte his wyf was set al his entente.

Whan that his doghter twelf yeer was of age,
He to the court of Rome, in subtil wyse
Enformed of his wil, sente his message,
Comaunding hem swiche bulles to devyse
As to his cruel purpos may suffyse,
How that the pope, as for his peples reste,
Bad him to wedde another, if him leste.

I seye, he bad they sholde countrefete
The popes bulles, making mencioun
That he hath leve his firste wyf to lete,
As by the popes dispensacioun,
To stinte rancour and dissencioun
Bitwixe his peple and him; thus seyde the bulle,
The which they han publiced atte fulle.

The rude peple, as it no wonder is,
Wenden ful wel that it had been right so;
But whan thise tydinges cam to Grisildis,
I deme that hir herte was ful wo.
But she, y-lyke sad for evermo,
Disposed was, this humble creature,
Thadversitee of fortune al tendure.

Abyding ever his lust and his plesaunce,
To whom that she was yeven, herte and al,
As to hir verray worldly suffisaunce;
But shortly if this storie I tellen shal,
This markis writen hath in special

A lettre in which he sheweth his entente,
And secrely he to Boloigne it sente.

To the erl of Panik, which that hadde tho
Wedded his suster, preyde he specially
To bringen hoom agayn his children two
In honurable estaat al openly.
But o thing he him preyede outerly,
That he to no wight, though men wolde enquere,
Sholde nat telle, whos children that they were,

But seye, the mayden sholde y-wedded be
Un-to the markis of Saluce anon.
And as this erl was preyed, so dide he;
For at day set he on his wey is goon
Toward Saluce, and lordes many oon,
In riche array, this mayden for to gyde;
Hir yonge brother ryding hir bisyde.

Arrayed was toward hir mariage
This fresshe mayde, ful of gemmes clere;
Hir brother, which that seven yeer was of age,
Arrayed eek ful fresh in his manere.
And thus in greet noblesse and with glad chere,
Toward Saluces shaping hir Iourney,
Fro day to day they ryden in hir wey.

Explicit quarta pars. Sequitur quinta pars.

Among al this, after his wikke usage,
This markis, yet his wyf to tempte more
To the uttereste preve of hir corage,
Fully to han experience and lore
If that she were as stedfast as bifore,
He on a day in open audience
Ful boistously hath seyd hir this sentence:

'Certes, Grisilde, I hadde y-nough plesaunce
To han yow to my wyf for your goodnesse,
As for your trouthe and for your obeisaunce,
Nought for your linage ne for your richesse;
But now knowe I in verray soothfastnesse
That in gret lordshipe, if I wel avyse,
Ther is gret servitute in sondry wyse.

I may nat don as every plowman may;
My peple me constreyneth for to take
Another wyf, and cryen day by day;
And eek the pope, rancour for to slake,
Consenteth it, that dar I undertake;
And treweliche thus muche I wol yow seye,
My newe wyf is coming by the weye.

Be strong of herte, and voyde anon hir place,
And thilke dower that ye broghten me
Tak it agayn, I graunte it of my grace;
Retourneth to your fadres hous,' quod he;
'No man may alwey han prosperitee;
With evene herte I rede yow tendure
The strook of fortune or of aventure.'

And she answerde agayn in pacience,
'My lord,' quod she, 'I woot, and wiste alway
How that bitwixen your magnificence
And my poverte no wight can ne may
Maken comparison; it is no nay.
I ne heeld me never digne in no manere
To be your wyf, no, ne your chamberere.

And in this hous, ther ye me lady made —
The heighe god take I for my witnesse,
And also wisly he my soule glade —
I never heeld me lady ne maistresse,
But humble servant to your worthinesse,
And ever shal, whyl that my lyf may dure,
Aboven every worldly creature.

That ye so longe of your benignitee
Han holden me in honour and nobleye,
Wher-as I was noght worthy for to be,
That thonke I god and yow, to whom I preye
Foryelde it yow; there is na-more to seye.
Un-to my fader gladly wol I wende,
And with him dwelle un-to my lyves ende.

Ther I was fostred of a child ful smal,
Til I be deed, my lyf ther wol I lede

A widwe clene, in body, herte, and al.
For sith I yaf to yow my maydenhede,
And am your trewe wyf, it is no drede,
God shilde swich a lordes wyf to take
Another man to housbonde or to make.

And of your newe wyf, god of his grace
So graunte yow wele and prosperitee:
For I wol gladly yelden hir my place,
In which that I was blisful wont to be,
For sith it lyketh yow, my lord,' quod she,
'That whylom weren al myn hertes reste,
That I shal goon, I wol gon whan yow leste.

But ther-as ye me profre swich dowaire
As I first broghte, it is wel in my minde
It were my wrecched clothes, no-thing faire,
The which to me were hard now for to finde.
O gode god! how gentil and how kinde
Ye semed by your speche and your visage
The day that maked was our mariage!

But sooth is seyd, algate I finde it trewe—
For in effect it preved is on me—
Love is noght old as whan that it is newe.
But certes, lord, for noon adversitee,
To dyen in the cas, it shal nat be
That ever in word or werk I shal repente
That I yow yaf myn herte in hool entente.

My lord, ye woot that, in my fadres place,
Ye dede me strepe out of my povre wede,
And richely me cladden, of your grace.
To yow broghte I noghte elles, out of drede,
But feyth and nakednesse and maydenhede.
And here agayn my clothing I restore,
And eek my wedding-ring, for evermore.

The remenant of your Iewels redy be
In-with your chambre, dar I saufly sayn;
Naked out of my fadres hous,' quod she,
'I cam, and naked moot I turne agayn.

Al your plesaunce wol I folwen fayn;
But yet I hope it be nat your entente
That I smoklees out of your paleys wente.

Ye coude nat doon so dishoneste a thing,
That thilke wombe in which your children leye
Sholde, biforn the peple, in my walking,
Be seyn al bare; wherfor I yow preye,
Let me nat lyk a worm go by the weye.
Remembre yow, myn owene lord so dere,
I was your wyf, thogh I unworthy were.

Wherfor, in guerdon of my maydenhede,
Which that I broghte, and noght agayn I bere,
As voucheth sauf to yeve me, to my mede,
But swich a smok as I was wont to were,
That I therwith may wrye the wombe of here
That was your wyf; and heer take I my leve
Of yow, myn owene lord, lest I yow greve.'

'The smok,' quod he, 'that thou hast on thy bak,
Lat it be stille, and ber it forth with thee.'
But wel unnethes thilke word he spak,
But wente his wey for rewthe and for pitee.
Biforn the folk hir-selven strepeth she,
And in hir smok, with heed and foot al bare,
Toward hir fader hous forth is she fare.

The folk hir folwe wepinge in hir weye,
And fortune ay they cursen as they goon;
But she fro weping kepte hir yën dreye,
Ne in this tyme word ne spak she noon.
Hir fader, that this tyding herde anoon,
Curseth the day and tyme that nature
Shoop him to been a lyves creature.

For out of doute this olde povre man
Was ever in suspect of hir mariage;
For ever he demed, sith that it bigan,
That whan the lord fulfild had his corage,
Him wolde thinke it were a disparage

To his estaat so lowe for talighte,
And voyden hir as sone as ever he mighte.

Agayns his doghter hastilich goth he,
For he by noyse of folk knew hir cominge,
And with hir olde cote, as it mighte be,
He covered hir, ful sorwefully wepinge;
But on hir body mighte he it nat bringe.
For rude was the cloth, and more of age
By dayes fele than at hir mariage.

Thus with hir fader, for a certeyn space,
Dwelleth this flour of wyfly pacience,
That neither by hir wordes ne hir face
Biforn the folk, ne eek in hir absence,
Ne shewed she that hir was doon offence;
Ne of hir heigh estaat no remembraunce
Ne hadde she, as by hir countenaunce.

No wonder is, for in hir grete estaat
Hir goost was ever in pleyn humylitee;
No tendre mouth, non herte delicaat,
No pompe, no semblant of royaltee,
But ful of pacient benignitee,
Discreet and prydeles, ay honurable,
And to hir housbonde ever meke and stable.

Men speke of Iob and most for his humblesse,
As clerkes, whan hem list, can wel endyte,
Namely of men, but as in soothfastnesse,
Thogh clerkes preyse wommen but a lyte,
Ther can no man in humblesse him acquyte
As womman can, ne can ben half so trewe
As wommen been, but it be falle of-newe.

[*Pars Sexta.*]

Fro Boloigne is this erl of Panik come,
Of which the fame up-sprang to more and lesse,
And in the peples eres alle and some
Was couth eek, that a newe markisesse
He with him broghte, in swich pompe and richesse,
That never was ther seyn with mannes yë
So noble array in al West Lumbardye.

The markis, which that shoop and knew al this,
Er that this erl was come, sente his message
For thilke sely povre Grisildis;
And she with humble herte and glad visage,
Nat with no swollen thoght in hir corage,
Cam at his heste, and on hir knees hir sette,
And reverently and wysly she him grette.

'Grisild,' quod he, 'my wille is outerly,
This mayden, that shal wedded been to me,
Receyved be to-morwe as royally
As it possible is in myn hous to be.
And eek that every wight in his degree
Have his estaat in sitting and servyse
And heigh plesaunce, as I can best devyse.

I have no wommen suffisaunt certayn
The chambres for tarraye in ordinaunce
After my lust, and therfor wolde I fayn
That thyn were al swich maner governaunce;
Thou knowest eek of old al my plesaunce;
Though thyn array be badde and yvel biseye,
Do thou thy devoir at the leeste weye.'

'Nat only, lord, that I am glad,' quod she,
'To doon your lust, but I desyre also
Yow for to serve and plese in my degree
With-outen feynting, and shal evermo.
Ne never, for no wele ne no wo,
Ne shal the gost with-in myn herte stente
To love yow best with al my trewe entente.'

And with that word she gan the hous to dighte,
And tables for to sette and beddes make;
And peyned hir to doon al that she mighte,
Preying the chambereres, for goddes sake,
To hasten hem, and faste swepe and shake;
And she, the moste servisable of alle,
Hath every chambre arrayed and his halle.

Abouten undern gan this erl alighte,
That with him broghte thise noble children tweye,
For which the peple ran to seen the sighte
Of hir array, so richely biseye;
And than at erst amonges hem they seye,
That Walter was no fool, thogh that him leste
To chaunge his wyf, for it was for the beste.

For she is fairer, as they demen alle,
Than is Grisild, and more tendre of age,
And fairer fruit bitwene hem sholde falle,
And more plesant, for hir heigh linage;
Hir brother eek so fair was of visage,
That hem to seen the peple hath caught plesaunce,
Commending now the markis governaunce. —

Auctor. 'O stormy peple! unsad and ever untrewe!
Ay undiscreet and chaunging as a vane,
Delyting ever in rumbel that is newe,
For lyk the mone ay wexe ye and wane;
Ay ful of clapping, dere y-nogh a lane;
Your doom is fals, your constance yvel preveth,
A ful greet fool is he that on yow leveth!'

Thus seyden sadde folk in that citee,
Whan that the peple gazed up and doun,
For they were glad, right for the noveltee,
To han a newe lady of hir toun.
Na-more of this make I now mencioun;
But to Grisilde agayn wol I me dresse,
And telle hir constance and hir bisinesse. —

Ful bisy was Grisilde in every thing
That to the feste was apertinent;
Right noght was she abayst of hir clothing,
Though it were rude and somdel eek torent.
But with glad chere to the yate is went,
With other folk, to grete the markisesse,
And after that doth forth hir bisinesse.

With so glad chere his gestes she receyveth,
And conningly, everich in his degree,
That no defaute no man aperceyveth;
But ay they wondren what she mighte be
That in so povre array was for to see,
And coude swich honour and reverence;
And worthily they preisen hir prudence.

In al this mene whyle she ne stente
This mayde and eek hir brother to commende
With al hir herte, in ful benigne entente,
So wel, that no man coude hir prys amende.
But atte laste, whan that thise lordes wende
To sitten doun to mete, he gan to calle
Grisilde, as she was bisy in his halle.

'Grisilde,' quod he, as it were in his pley,
'How lyketh thee my wyf and hir beautee?'
'Right wel,' quod she, 'my lord; for, in good fey,
A fairer say I never noon than she.
I prey to god yeve hir prosperitee;
And so hope I that he wol to yow sende
Plesance y-nogh un-to your lyves ende.

O thing biseke I yow and warne also,
That ye ne prikke with no tormentinge
This tendre mayden, as ye han don mo;
For she is fostred in hir norishinge
More tendrely, and, to my supposinge,
She coude nat adversitee endure
As coude a povre fostred creature.'

And whan this Walter say hir pacience,
Hir glade chere and no malice at al,
And he so ofte had doon to hir offence,
And she ay sad and constant as a wal,
Continuing ever hir innocence overal,
This sturdy markis gan his herte dresse
To rewen up-on hir wyfly stedfastnesse.

'This is y-nogh, Grisilde myn,' quod he,
'Be now na-more agast ne yvel apayed;
I have thy feith and thy benignitee,
As wel as ever womman was, assayed,
In greet estaat, and povreliche arrayed.

Now knowe I, dere wyf, thy stedfastnesse,'—
And hir in armes took and gan hir kesse.

And she for wonder took of it no keep;
She herde nat what thing he to hir seyde;
She ferde as she had stert out of a sleep,
Til she out of hir masednesse abreyde.
'Grisilde,' quod he, 'by god that for us deyde,
Thou art my wyf, ne noon other I have,
Ne never hadde, as god my soule save!

This is thy doghter which thou hast supposed
To be my wyf; that other feithfully
Shal be myn heir, as I have ay purposed;
Thou bare him in thy body trewely.
At Boloigne have I kept hem prively;
Tak hem agayn, for now maystow nat seye
That thou hast lorn non of thy children tweye.

And folk that otherweyes han seyd of me,
I warne hem wel that I have doon this dede
For no malice ne for no crueltee,
But for tassaye in thee thy wommanhede,
And nat to sleen my children, god forbede!
But for to kepe hem prively and stille,
Til I thy purpos knewe and al thy wille.'

Whan she this herde, aswowne doun she falleth
For pitous Ioye, and after hir swowninge
She bothe hir yonge children un-to hir calleth,
And in hir armes, pitously wepinge,
Embraceth hem, and tendrely kissinge
Ful lyk a mooder, with hir salte teres
She batheth bothe hir visage and hir heres.

O, which a pitous thing it was to see
Hir swowning, and hir humble voys to here!
'Grauntmercy, lord, that thanke I yow,' quod she,
'That ye han saved me my children dere!

Now rekke I never to ben deed right here;
Sith I stonde in your love and in your grace,
No fors of deeth, ne whan my spirit pace!

O tendre, o dere, o yonge children myne,
Your woful mooder wende stedfastly
That cruel houndes or som foul vermyne
Hadde eten yow; but god, of his mercy,
And your benigne fader tendrely
Hath doon yow kept;' and in that same stounde
Al sodeynly she swapte adoun to grounde.

And in her swough so sadly holdeth she
Hir children two, whan she gan hem tembrace,
That with greet sleighte and greet difficultee
The children from hir arm they gonne arace.
O many a teer on many a pitous face
Doun ran of hem that stoden hir biside;
Unnethe abouten hir mighte they abyde.

Walter hir gladeth, and hir sorwe slaketh;
She ryseth up, abaysed, from hir traunce,
And every wight hir Ioye and feste maketh,
Til she hath caught agayn hir contenaunce.
Walter hir dooth so feithfully plesaunce,
That it was deyntee for to seen the chere
Bitwixe hem two, now they ben met y-fere.

Thise ladyes, whan that they hir tyme say,
Han taken hir, and in-to chambre goon,
And strepen hir out of hir rude array,
And in a cloth of gold that brighte shoon,
With a coroune of many a riche stoon
Up-on hir hede, they in-to halle hir broghte,
And ther she was honoured as hir oghte.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende,
For every man and womman dooth his might
This day in murthe and revel to dispende
Til on the welkne shoon the sterres light.

For more solempne in every mannes sight 1125
This feste was, and gretter of costage,
Than was the revel of hir mariage.

Ful many a yeer in heigh prosperitee
Liven thise two in concord and in reste,
And richely his doghter maried he 1130
Un-to a lord, oon of the worthieste
Of al Itaille; and than in pees and reste
His wyves fader in his court he kepeth,
Til that the soule out of his body crepeth.

His sone succedeth in his heritage 1135
In reste and pees, after his fader day;
And fortunat was eek in mariage,
Al putte he nat his wyf in greet assay.
This world is nat so strong, it is no nay,
As it hath been in olde tymes yore, 1140
And herkneth what this auctour seith therfore.

This storie is seyd, nat for that wyves sholde
Folwen Grisilde as in humilitee,
For it were importable, though they wolde;
But for that every wight, in his degree, 1145
Sholde be constant in adversitee
As was Grisilde; therfor Petrark wryteth
This storie, which with heigh style he endyteth.

For, sith a womman was so pacient
Un-to a mortal man, wel more us oghte
Receyven al in gree that god us sent; 1151
For greet skile is, he preve that he wroghte.
But he ne tempteth no man that he boghte,
As seith seint Iame, if ye his pistel rede;
He preveth folk al day, it is no drede, 1155

And suffreth us, as for our excercyse,
With sharpe scourges of adversitee
Ful ofte to be bete in sondry wyse;
Nat for to knowe our wil, for certes he,
Ere we were born, knew al our fredetee; 1160
And for our beste is al his governaunce;
Lat us than live in vertuous suffraunce.*

But o word, lordinges, herkneth er I go: —
It were ful hard to finde now a dayes
In al a toun Grisildes three or two; 1165
For, if that they were put to swiche assayes,
The gold of hem hath now so badde alayes
With bras, that thogh the coyne be fair at yë,
It wolde rather breste a-two than plye.

For which heer, for the wyves love of Bathe, 1170
Whos lyf and al hir secte god mayntene
In heigh maistrye, and elles were it scathe,
I wol with lusty herte fresshe and grene
Seyn yow a song to glade yow, I wene,
And lat us stinte of ernestful matere: —
Herkneth my song, that seith in this manere. 1176

Lenvoy de Chaucer.

Grisilde is deed, and eek hir pacience,
And bothe atones buried in Itaille;
For which I crye in open audience, 1179
No wedded man so hardy be tassaille
His wyves pacience, in hope to finde
Grisildes, for in certein he shall faille!

O noble wyves, ful of heigh prudence,
Lat noon humilitee your tonge naille,
Ne lat no clerk have cause or diligence
To wryte of yow a storie of swich mervaille 1186
As of Grisildis pacient and kinde;
Lest Chichevache yow swelwe in hir entraille!
Folweth Ekko, that holdeth no silence,

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* *It seems to have been* Chaucer's *intention, in the first instance, to end this* Tale *here. Hence, we find, in* MSS. E. Hn. Cm. Dd., *the following genuine, but rejected stanza, suitable for insertion at this point:* —

Bihold the merye wordes of the Hoste.

This worthy Clerk, whan ended was his tale,
Our hoste seyde, and swoor by goddes bones,
'Me were lever than a barel ale
My wyf at hoom had herd this legende ones;
This is a gentil tale for the nones,
As to my purpos, wiste ye my wille;
But thing that wol nat be, lat it be stille.'

Here endeth the Tale of the Clerk of Oxenford.

But evere answereth at the countretaille;
Beth nat bidaffed for your innocence,
But sharply tak on yow the governaille.
Emprinteth wel this lesson in your minde
For commune profit, sith it may availe.

Ye archewyves, stondeth at defence,
Sin ye be stronge as is a greet camaille;
Ne suffreth nat that men yow doon offence.
And sclendre wyves, feble as in bataille,
Beth egre as is a tygre yond in Inde;
Ay clappeth as a mille, I yow consaille.

Ne dreed hem nat, do hem no reverence;
For though thyn housbonde armed be in maille,
The arwes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perce his brest, and eek his aventaille;
In Ialousye I rede eek thou him binde,
And thou shalt make him couche as dooth a quaille.

If thou be fair, ther folk ben in presence
Shew thou thy visage and thyn apparaille;
If thou be foul, be free of thy dispence,
To gete thee freendes ay do thy travaille;
Be ay of chere as light as leef on linde,
And lat him care, and wepe, and wringe, and waille!

Here endeth the Clerk of Oxonford his Tale.

THE MERCHANT'S PROLOGUE.

The Prologe of the Marchantes Tale.

'WEPING and wayling, care, and other sorwe
I know y-nogh, on even and a-morwe,'
Quod the Marchaunt, 'and so don othere mo
That wedded been, I trowe that it be so.
For, wel I woot, it fareth so with me.
I have a wyf, the worste that may be;
For thogh the feend to hir y-coupled were,
She wolde him overmacche, I dar wel swere.
What sholde I yow reherce in special
Hir hye malice? she is a shrewe at al.
Ther is a long and large difference
Bitwix Grisildis grete pacience
And of my wyf the passing crueltee.
Were I unbounden, al-so moot I thee!
I wolde never eft comen in the snare.
We wedded men live in sorwe and care;
Assaye who-so wol, and he shal finde
I seye sooth, by seint Thomas of Inde,
As for the more part, I sey nat alle.
God shilde that it sholde so bifalle!
A! good sir hoost! I have y-wedded be
Thise monthes two, and more nat, pardee;
And yet, I trowe, he that all his lyve
Wyflees hath been, though that men wolde him ryve
Un-to the herte, ne coude in no manere
Tellen so muchel sorwe, as I now here
Coude tellen of my wyves cursednesse!'
'Now,' quod our hoost, 'Marchaunt, so god yow blesse,
Sin ye so muchel knowen of thát art,
Ful hertely I pray yow telle us part.'
'Gladly,' quod he, 'but of myn owene sore,
For sory herte, I telle may na-more.'

THE MARCHANTES TALE.

Here biginneth the Marchantes Tale.

WHYLOM ther was dwellinge in Lumbardye
A worthy knight, that born was of Pavye,
In which he lived in greet prosperitee;
And sixty yeer a wyflees man was he,
And folwed ay his bodily delyt
On wommen, ther-as was his appetyt,
As doon thise foles that ben seculeer.
And whan that he was passed sixty yeer,
Were it for holinesse or for dotage,
I can nat seye, but swich a greet corage
Hadde this knight to been a wedded man,
That day and night he dooth al that he can
Tespyen where he mighte wedded be;
Preyinge our lord to granten him, that he
Mighte ones knowe of thilke blisful lyf
That is bitwixe an housbond and his wyf;
And for to live under that holy bond
With which that first god man and womman bond.
'Non other lyf,' seyde he, 'is worth a bene;
For wedlok is so esy and so clene,
That in this world it is a paradys.'
Thus seyde this olde knight, that was so wys.
And certeinly, as sooth as god is king,
To take a wyf, it is a glorious thing,
And namely whan a man is old and hoor;
Thanne is a wyf the fruit of his tresor.
Than sholde he take a yong wyf and a feir,
On which he mighte engendren him an heir,
And lede his lyf in Ioye and in solas,
Wher-as thise bacheleres singe 'allas,'
Whan that they finden any adversitee
In love, which nis but childish vanitee.
And trewely it sit wel to be so,
That bacheleres have often peyne and wo;
On brotel ground they builde, and brotelnesse
They finde, whan they wene sikernesse.
They live but as a brid or as a beste,
In libertee, and under non areste,
Ther-as a wedded man in his estaat
Liveth a lyf blisful and ordinaat,
Under the yok of mariage y-bounde;
Wel may his herte in Ioye and blisse habounde.
For who can be so buxom as a wyf?
Who is so trewe, and eek so ententyf
To kepe him, syk and hool, as is his make?
For wele or wo, she wol him nat forsake.
She nis nat wery him to love and serve,
Thogh that he lye bedrede til he sterve.
And yet somme clerkes seyn, it nis nat so,
Of whiche he, Theofraste, is oon of tho.
What force though Theofraste liste lye?
'Ne take no wyf,' quod he, 'for housbondrye,
As for to spare in houshold thy dispence;
A trewe servant dooth more diligence,
Thy good to kepe, than thyn owene wyf.
For she wol clayme half part al hir lyf;
And if that thou be syk, so god me save,
Thy verray frendes or a trewe knave
Wol kepe thee bet than she that waiteth ay
After thy good, and hath don many a day.'
And if thou take a wyf un-to thyn hold,
Ful lightly maystow been a cokewold.
This sentence, and an hundred thinges worse,
Wryteth this man, ther god his bones corse!
But take no kepe of al swich vanitee;
Deffye Theofraste and herke me.
A wyf is goddes yifte verrailly;
Alle other maner yiftes hardily,
As londes, rentes, pasture, or commune,
Or moebles, alle ben yiftes of fortune,
That passen as a shadwe upon a wal.
But dredelees, if pleynly speke I shal,

A wyf wol laste, and in thyn hous endure,
Wel lenger than thee list, paraventure.
Mariage is a ful gret sacrement;
He which that hath no wyf, I holde him shent;
He liveth helplees and al desolat,
I speke of folk in seculer estaat.
And herke why, I sey nat this for noght,
That womman is for mannes help y-wroght.
The hye god, whan he hadde Adam maked,
And saugh him al allone, bely-naked,
God of his grete goodnesse seyde than,
'Lat us now make an help un-to this man
Lyk to him-self;' and thanne he made him Eve.
Heer may ye se, and heer-by may ye preve,
That wyf is mannes help and his confort,
His paradys terrestre and his disport.
So buxom and so vertuous is she,
They moste nedes live in unitee.
O flesh they been, and o flesh, as I gesse,
Hath but on herte, in wele and in distresse.
A wyf! a! Seinte Marie, *benedicite!*
How mighte a man han any adversitee
That hath a wyf? certes, I can nat seye.
The blisse which that is bitwixe hem tweye
Ther may no tonge telle, or herte thinke.
If he be povre, she helpeth him to swinke;
She kepeth his good, and wasteth never a deel;
Al that hir housbonde lust, hir lyketh weel;
She seith not ones 'nay,' whan he seith 'ye.'
'Do this,' seith he; 'al redy, sir,' seith she.
O blisful ordre of wedlok precious,
Thou art so mery, and eek so vertuous,
And so commended and appreved eek,
That every man that halt him worth a leek,
Up-on his bare knees oghte al his lyf
Thanken his god that him hath sent a wyf;
Or elles preye to god him for to sende
A wyf, to laste un-to his lyves ende.
For thanne his lyf is set in sikernesse;
He may nat be deceyved, as I gesse,
So that he werke after his wyves reed;
Than may he boldly beren up his heed,
They been so trewe and ther-with-al so wyse;
For which, if thou wolt werken as the wyse,
Do alwey so as wommen wol thee rede.
Lo, how that Iacob, as thise clerkes rede,
By good conseil of his moder Rebekke,
Bond the kides skin aboute his nekke;
Thurgh which his fadres benisoun he wan.
Lo, Iudith, as the storie eek telle can,
By wys conseil she goddes peple kepte,
And slow him, Olofernus, whyl he slepte.
Lo Abigayl, by good conseil how she
Saved hir housbond Nabal, whan that he
Sholde han be slayn; and loke, Ester also
By good conseil delivered out of wo
The peple of god, and made him, Mardochee,
Of Assuere enhaunced for to be.
Ther nis no-thing in gree superlatyf,
As seith Senek, above an humble wyf.
Suffre thy wyves tonge, as Caton bit;
She shal comande, and thou shalt suffren it;
And yet she wol obeye of curteisye.
A wyf is keper of thyn housbondrye;
Wel may the syke man biwaille and wepe,
Ther-as ther nis no wyf the hous to kepe.
I warne thee, if wysly thou wolt wirche,
Love wel thy wyf, as Crist loveth his chirche.
If thou lovest thy-self, thou lovest thy wyf;
No man hateth his flesh, but in his lyf
He fostreth it, and therfore bidde I thee,
Cherisse thy wyf, or thou shalt never thee.
Housbond and wyf, what so men Iape or pleye,
Of worldly folk holden the siker weye;

They been so knit, ther may noon harm bityde;
And namely, up-on the wyves syde.
For which this Ianuarie, of whom I tolde,
Considered hath, inwith his dayes olde,
The lusty lyf, the vertuous quiete, 1395
That is in mariage hony-swete;
And for his freendes on a day he sente,
To tellen hem theffect of his entente.
With face sad, his tale he hath hem told;
He seyde, 'freendes, I am hoor and old,
And almost, god wot, on my pittes brinke; 1401
Up-on my soule somwhat moste I thinke.
I have my body folily despended;
Blessed be god, that it shal been amended!
For I wol be, certeyn, a wedded man,
And that anoon in al the haste I can,
Un-to som mayde fair and tendre of age.
I prey yow, shapeth for my mariage
Al sodeynly, for I wol nat abyde; 1409
And I wol fonde tespyen, on my syde,
To whom I may be wedded hastily.
But for-as-muche as ye ben mo than I,
Ye shullen rather swich a thing espyen
Than I, and wher me best were to allyen.
But o thing warne I yow, my freendes dere, 1415
I wol non old wyf han in no manere.
She shal nat passe twenty yeer, certayn;
Old fish and yong flesh wolde I have ful fayn.
Bet is,' quod he, 'a pyk than a pikerel;
And bet than old boef is the tendre veel.
I wol no womman thritty yeer of age,
It is but bene-straw and greet forage.
And eek thise olde widwes, god it woot,
They conne so muchel craft on Wades boot,
So muchel broken harm, whan that hem leste, 1425
That with hem sholde I never live in reste.
For sondry scoles maken sotil clerkis;
Womman of manye scoles half a clerk is.
But certeynly, a yong thing may men gye,
Right as men may warm wex with handes plye. 1430
Wherfore I sey yow pleynly, in a clause,
I wol non old wyf han right for this cause.
For if so were, I hadde swich mischaunce,
That I in hir ne coude han no plesaunce,
Thanne sholde I lede my lyf in avoutrye,
And go streight to the devel, whan I dye. 1436
Ne children sholde I none up-on hir geten;
Yet were me lever houndes had me eten,
Than that myn heritage sholde falle
In straunge hand, and this I tell yow alle. 1440
I dote nat, I woot the cause why
Men sholde wedde, and forthermore wot I,
Ther speketh many a man of mariage,
That woot na-more of it than woot my page,
For whiche causes man sholde take a wyf. 1445
If he ne may nat liven chast his lyf,
Take him a wyf with greet devocioun,
By-cause of leveful procreacioun
Of children, to thonour of god above,
And nat only for paramour or love; 1450
And for they sholde lecherye eschue,
And yelde hir dettes whan that they ben due;
Or for that ech of hem sholde helpen other
In meschief, as a suster shal the brother;
And live in chastitee ful holily. 1455
But sires, by your leve, that am nat I.
For god be thanked, I dar make avaunt,
I fele my limes stark and suffisaunt
To do al that a man bilongeth to;
I woot my-selven best what I may do. 1460
Though I be hoor, I fare as dooth a tree
That blosmeth er that fruyt y-woxen be;
A blosmy tree nis neither drye ne deed.
I fele me nowher hoor but on myn heed;
Myn herte and alle my limes been as grene 1465
As laurer thurgh the yeer is for to sene.
And sin that ye han herd al myn entente,
I prey yow to my wil ye wole assente.'
Diverse men diversely him tolde
Of mariage manye ensamples olde. 1470
Somme blamed it, somme preysed it, certeyn;
But atte laste, shortly for to seyn,

As al day falleth altercacioun
Bitwixen freendes in disputisoun,
Ther fil a stryf bitwixe his bretheren two,
Of whiche that oon was cleped Placebo,
Iustinus soothly called was that other.
Placebo seyde, 'o Ianuarie, brother,
Ful litel nede had ye, my lord so dere,
Conseil to axe of any that is here;
But that ye been so ful of sapience,
That yow ne lyketh, for your heighe prudence,
To weyven fro the word of Salomon.
This word seyde he un-to us everichon:
"Wirk alle thing by conseil," thus seyde he,
"And thanne shaltow nat repente thee."
But though that Salomon spak swich a word,
Myn owene dere brother and my lord,
So wisly god my soule bringe at reste,
I hold your owene conseil is the beste.
For brother myn, of me tak this motyf,
I have now been a court-man al my lyf.
And god it woot, though I unworthy be,
I have stonden in ful greet degree
Abouten lordes of ful heigh estaat;
Yet hadde I never with noon of hem debaat.
I never hem contraried, trewely;
I woot wel that my lord can more than I.
What that he seith, I holde it ferme and stable;
I seye the same, or elles thing semblable.
A ful gret fool is any conseillour,
That serveth any lord of heigh honour,
That dar presume, or elles thenken it,
That his conseil sholde passe his lordes wit.
Nay, lordes been no foles, by my fay;
Ye han your-selven shewed heer to-day
So heigh sentence, so holily and weel,
That I consente and conferme every-deel
Your wordes alle, and your opinion.
By god, ther nis no man in al this toun
Nin al Itaille, that coude bet han sayd;
Crist halt him of this conseil wel apayd.
And trewely, it is an heigh corage
Of any man, that stopen is in age,
To take a yong wyf; by my fader kin,
Your herte hangeth on a Ioly pin.
Doth now in this matere right as yow leste,
For finally I holde it for the beste.'
Iustinus, that ay stille sat and herde,
Right in this wyse to Placebo answerde:
'Now brother myn, be pacient, I preye,
Sin ye han seyd, and herkneth what I seye.
Senek among his othere wordes wyse
Seith, that a man oghte him right wel avyse,
To whom he yeveth his lond or his catel.
And sin I oghte avyse me right wel
To whom I yeve my good awey fro me,
Wel muchel more I oghte avysed be
To whom I yeve my body; for alwey
I warne yow wel, it is no childes pley
To take a wyf with-oute avysement.
Men moste enquere, this is myn assent,
Wher she be wys, or sobre, or dronkelewe,
Or proud, or elles other-weys a shrewe;
A chydester, or wastour of thy good,
Or riche, or poore, or elles mannish wood.
Al-be-it so that no man finden shal
Noon in this world that trotteth hool in al,
Ne man ne beest, swich as men coude devyse;
But nathelees, it oghte y-nough suffise
With any wyf, if so were that she hadde
Mo gode thewes than hir vyces badde;
And al this axeth leyser for tenquere.
For god it woot, I have wept many a tere
Ful prively, sin I have had a wyf.
Preyse who-so wole a wedded mannes lyf,
Certein, I finde in it but cost and care,
And observances, of alle blisses bare.
And yet, god woot, my neighebores aboute,
And namely of wommen many a route,
Seyn that I have the moste stedefast wyf,
And eek the mekeste oon that bereth lyf.
But I wot best wher wringeth me my sho.
Ye mowe, for me, right as yow lyketh do;
Avyseth yow, ye been a man of age,
How that ye entren in-to mariage,
And namely with a yong wyf and a fair.
By him that made water, erthe, and air,
The yongest man that is in al this route
Is bisy y-nogh to bringen it aboute
To han his wyf allone, trusteth me.
Ye shul nat plese hir fully yeres three,
This is to seyn, to doon hir ful plesaunce.
A wyf axeth ful many an observaunce.

I prey yow that ye be nat yvel apayd.' 1565
'Wel,' quod this Ianuarie, 'and hastow sayd?
Straw for thy Senek, and for thy proverbes,
I counte nat a panier ful of herbes
Of scole-termes; wyser men than thow,
As thou hast herd, assenteden right now 1570
To my purpos; Placebo, what sey ye?'
'I seye, it is a cursed man,' quod he,
'That letteth matrimoine, sikerly.'
And with that word they rysen sodeynly,
And been assented fully, that he sholde
Be wedded whanne him list and wher he wolde. 1576
Heigh fantasye and curious bisinesse
Fro day to day gan in the soule impresse
Of Ianuarie aboute his mariage. 1579
Many fair shap, and many a fair visage
Ther passeth thurgh his herte, night by night.
As who-so toke a mirour polished bright,
And sette it in a commune market-place,
Than sholde he see many a figure pace
By his mirour; and, in the same wyse, 1585
Gan Ianuarie inwith his thoght devyse
Of maydens, whiche that dwelten him bisyde.
He wiste nat wher that he mighte abyde.
For if that oon have beaute in hir face,
Another stant so in the peples grace 1590
For hir sadnesse, and hir benignitee,
That of the peple grettest voys hath she.
And somme were riche, and hadden badde name.
But nathelees, bitwixe ernest and game,
He atte laste apoynted him on oon, 1595
And leet alle othere from his herte goon,
And chees hir of his owene auctoritee;
For love is blind al day, and may nat see.
And whan that he was in his bed y-broght,
He purtreyed, in his herte and in his thoght, 1600
Hir fresshe beautee and hir age tendre,
Hir myddel smal, hir armes longe and sclendre,
Hir wyse governaunce, hir gentillesse,
Hir wommanly beringe and hir sadnesse.
And whan that he on hir was condescended, 1605
Him thoughte his chois mighte nat ben amended.
For whan that he him-self concluded hadde,
Him thoughte ech other mannes wit so badde,
That impossible it were to replye
Agayn his chois, this was his fantasye. 1610
His freendes sente he to at his instaunce,
And preyed hem to doon him that plesaunce,
That hastily they wolden to him come;
He wolde abregge hir labour, alle and some.
Nedeth na-more for him to go ne ryde, 1615
He was apoynted ther he wolde abyde.
Placebo cam, and eek his freendes sone,
And alderfirst he bad hem alle a bone,
That noon of hem none argumentes make
Agayn the purpos which that he hath take; 1620
'Which purpos was plesant to god,' seyde he,
'And verray ground of his prosperitee.'
He seyde, ther was a mayden in the toun,
Which that of beautee hadde greet renoun,
Al were it so she were of smal degree; 1625
Suffyseth him hir youthe and hir beautee.
Which mayde, he seyde, he wolde han to his wyf,
To lede in ese and holinesse his lyf.
And thanked god, that he mighte han hire al,
That no wight of his blisse parten shal. 1630
And preyde hem to labouren in this nede,
And shapen that he faille nat to spede;
For thanne, he seyde, his spirit was at ese.
'Thanne is,' quod he, 'no-thing may me displese,
Save o thing priketh in my conscience, 1635
The which I wol reherce in your presence.
I have,' quod he, 'herd seyd, ful yore ago,
Ther may no man han parfite blisses two,

This is to seye, in erthe and eek in hevene.
For though he kepe him fro the sinnes sevene,
And eek from every branche of thilke tree,
Yet is ther so parfit felicitee,
And so greet ese and lust in mariage,
That ever I am agast, now in myn age,
That I shal lede now so mery a lyf,
So delicat, with-outen wo and stryf,
That I shal have myn hevene in erthe here.
For sith that verray hevene is boght so dere,
With tribulacioun and greet penaunce,
How sholde I thanne, that live in swich plesaunce
As alle wedded men don with hir wyvis,
Come to the blisse ther Crist eterne on lyve is?
This is my drede, and ye, my bretheren tweye,
Assoilleth me this questioun, I preye.'
Iustinus, which that hated his folye,
Answerde anon, right in his Iaperye;
And for he wolde his longe tale abregge,
He wolde noon auctoritee allegge,
But seyde, 'sire, so ther be noon obstacle
Other than this, god of his hye miracle
And of his mercy may so for yow wirche,
That, er ye have your right of holy chirche,
Ye may repente of wedded mannes lyf,
In which ye seyn ther is no wo ne stryf.
And elles, god forbede but he sente
A wedded man him grace to repente
Wel ofte rather than a sengle man!
And therfore, sire, the beste reed I can,
Dispeire yow noght, but have in your memorie,
Paraunter she may be your purgatorie!
She may be goddes mene, and goddes whippe;
Than shal your soule up to hevene skippe
Swifter than dooth an arwe out of the bowe!
I hope to god, her-after shul ye knowe,
That their nis no so greet felicitee
In mariage, ne never-mo shal be,
That yow shal lette of your savacioun,
So that ye use, as skile is and resoun,
The lustes of your wyf attemprely,
And that ye plese hir nat to amorously,
And that ye kepe yow eek from other sinne.
My tale is doon: — for my wit is thinne.
Beth nat agast her-of, my brother dere.' —
(But lat us waden out of this matere.
The Wyf of Bathe, if ye han understonde,
Of mariage, which we have on honde,
Declared hath ful wel in litel space). —
'Fareth now wel, god have yow in his grace.'
And with this word this Iustin and his brother
Han take hir leve, and ech of hem of other.
For whan they sawe it moste nedes be,
They wroghten so, by sly and wys tretee,
That she, this mayden, which that Maius highte,
As hastily as ever that she mighte,
Shal wedded be un-to this Ianuarie.
I trowe it were to longe yow to tarie,
If I yow tolde of every scrit and bond,
By which that she was feffed in his lond;
Or for to herknen of hir riche array.
But finally y-comen is the day
That to the chirche bothe be they went
For to receyve the holy sacrement.
Forth comth the preest, with stole aboute his nekke,
And bad hir be lyk Sarra and Rebekke,
In wisdom and in trouthe of mariage;
And seyde his orisons, as is usage,
And crouched hem, and bad god sholde hem blesse,
And made al siker y-nogh with holinesse.
Thus been they wedded with solempnitee,
And at the feste sitteth he and she
With other worthy folk up-on the deys.
Al ful of Ioye and blisse is the paleys,
And ful of instruments and of vitaille,
The moste deyntevous of al Itaille.
Biforn hem stoode swiche instruments of soun,
That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphioun,
Ne maden never swich a melodye.

At every cours than cam loud minstraleye,
That never tromped Ioab, for to here,
Nor he, Theodomas, yet half so clere,
At Thebes, whan the citee was in doute.
Bacus the wyn hem skinketh al aboute,
And Venus laugheth up-on every wight.
For Ianuarie was bicome hir knight,
And wolde bothe assayen his corage
In libertee, and eek in mariage;
And with hir fyrbrond in hir hand aboute
Daunceth biforn the bryde and al the route.
And certeinly, I dar right wel seyn this,
Ymenëus, that god of wedding is,
Saugh never his lyf so mery a wedded man.
Hold thou thy pees, thou poete Marcian,
That wrytest us that ilke wedding murie
Of hir, Philologye, and him, Mercurie,
And of the songes that the Muses songe.
To smal is bothe thy penne, and eek thy tonge,
For to descryven of this mariage.
Whan tendre youthe hath wedded stouping age,
Ther is swich mirthe that it may nat be writen;
Assayeth it your-self, than may ye witen
If that I lye or noon in this matere.
Maius, that sit with so benigne a chere,
Hir to biholde it semed fayëryë;
Quene Ester loked never with swich an yë
On Assuer, so meke a look hath she.
I may yow nat devyse al hir beautee;
But thus muche of hir beautee telle I may,
That she was lyk the brighte morwe of May,
Fulfild of alle beautee and plesaunce.
This Ianuarie is ravisshed in a traunce
At every time he loked on hir face;
But in his herte he gan hir to manace,
That he that night in armes wolde hir streyne
Harder than ever Paris dide Eleyne.
But nathelees, yet hadde he greet pitee,
That thilke night offenden hir moste he;
And thoughte, 'allas! o tendre creature!
Now wolde god ye mighte wel endure
Al my corage, it is so sharp and kene;
I am agast ye shul it nat sustene.
But god forbede that I dide al my might!
Now wolde god that it were woxen night,
And that the night wolde lasten evermo.
I wolde that al this peple were ago.'
And finally, he doth al his labour,
As he best mighte savinge his honour,
To haste hem fro the mete in subtil wyse.
The tyme cam that reson was to ryse;
And after that, men daunce and drinken faste,
And spyces al aboute the hous they caste;
And ful of Ioye and blisse is every man;
All but a squyer, highte Damian,
Which carf biforn the knight ful many a day.
He was so ravisshed on his lady May,
That for the verray peyne he was ny wood;
Almost he swelte and swowned ther he stood.
So sore hath Venus hurt him with hir brond,
As that she bar it daunsinge in hir hond.
And to his bed he wente him hastily;
Na-more of him as at this tyme speke I.
But ther I lete him wepe y-nough and pleyne,
Til fresshe May wol rewen on his peyne.
O perilous fyr, that in the bedstraw bredeth! *Auctor.*
O famulier foo, that his servyce bedeth!
O servant traitour, false hoomly hewe,
Lyk to the naddre in bosom sly untrewe,
God shilde us alle from your aqueyntaunce!
O Ianuarie, dronken in plesaunce
Of mariage, see how thy Damian,
Thyn owene squyer and thy borne man,
Entendeth for to do thee vileinye.
God graunte thee thyn hoomly fo tespye.
For in this world nis worse pestilence
Than hoomly foo al day in thy presence.
Parfourned hath the sonne his ark diurne,
No lenger may the body of him soiurne
On thorisonte, as in that latitude.
Night with his mantel, that is derk and rude,

Gan oversprede the hemisperie aboute;
For which departed is this lusty route
Fro Ianuarie, with thank on every syde.
Hom to hir houses lustily they ryde,
Wher-as they doon hir thinges as hem leste,
And whan they sye hir tyme, goon to reste.
Sone after that, this hastif Ianuarie
Wolde go to bedde, he wolde no lenger tarie.
He drinketh ipocras, clarree, and vernage
Of spyces hote, tencresen his corage;
And many a letuarie hadde he ful fyn,
Swiche as the cursed monk dan Constantyn
Hath writen in his book *de Coitu;*
To eten hem alle, he nas no-thing eschu.
And to his privee freendes thus seyde he:
'For goddes love, as sone as it may be,
Lat voyden al this hous in curteys wyse.'
And they han doon right as he wol devyse
Men drinken, and the travers drawe anon;
The bryde was broght a-bedde as stille as stoon;
And whan the bed was with the preest y-blessed.
Out of the chambre hath every wight him dressed.
And Ianuarie hath faste in armes take
His fresshe May, his paradys, his make.
He lulleth hir, he kisseth hir ful ofte
With thikke bristles of his berd unsofte,
Lyk to the skin of houndfish, sharp as brere,
For he was shave al newe in his manere.
He rubbeth hir aboute hir tendre face,
And seyde thus, 'allas! I moot trespace
To yow, my spouse, and yow gretly offende,
Er tyme come that I wil doun descende.
But nathelees, considereth this,' quod he,
'Ther nis no werkman, what-so-ever he be,
That may bothe werke wel and hastily;
This wol be doon at leyser parfitly.
It is no fors how longe that we pleye;
In trewe wedlok wedded be we tweye;
And blessed be the yok that we been inne,
For in our actes we mowe do no sinne.
A man may do no sinne with his wyf,
Ne hurte him-selven with his owene knyf;
For we han leve to pleye us by the lawe.'
Thus laboureth til that the daygan dawe;
And than he taketh a sop in fyn clarree,
And upright in his bed than sitteth he,
And after that he sang ful loude and clere,
And kiste his wyf, and made wantoun chere.
He was al coltish, ful of ragerye,
And ful of Iargon as a flekked pye.
The slakke skin aboute his nekke shaketh,
Whyl that he sang; so chaunteth he and craketh.
But god wot what that May thoughte in hir herte,
Whan she him saugh up sittinge in his sherte,
In his night-cappe, and with his nekke lene;
She preyseth nat his pleying worth a bene.
Than seide he thus, 'my reste wol I take;
Now day is come, I may no lenger wake.'
And doun he leyde his heed, and sleep til pryme.
And afterward, whan that he saugh his tyme,
Up ryseth Ianuarie; but fresshe May
Holdeth hir chambre un-to the fourthe day,
As usage is of wyves for the beste.
For every labour som-tyme moot han reste,
Or elles longe may he nat endure;
This is to seyn, no lyves creature,
Be it of fish, or brid, or beest, or man.

Now wol I speke of woful Damian, *Auctor.*

That languissheth for love, as ye shul here;
Therfore I speke to him in this manere:
I seye, 'O sely Damian, allas!
Answere to my demaunde, as in this cas,
How shaltow to thy lady fresshe May

Telle thy wo? She wole alwey seye
"nay";
Eek if thou speke, she wol thy wo
biwreye;
God be thyn help, I can no bettre seye.'
This syke Damian in Venus fyr
So brenneth, that he dyeth for desyr;
For which he putte his lyf in aventure
No lenger mighte he in this wyse endure;
But prively a penner gan he borwe,
And in a lettre wroot he al his sorwe,
In manere of a compleynt or a lay,
Un-to his faire fresshe lady May.
And in a purs of silk, heng on his sherte,
He hath it put, and leyde it at his herte.
The mone that, at noon, was, thilke
day
That Ianuarie hath wedded fresshe May,
In two of Taur, was in-to Cancre gliden;
So longe hath Maius in hir chambre
biden,
As custume is un-to thise nobles alle.
A bryde shal nat eten in the halle,
Til dayes foure or three dayes atte leste
Y-passed been; than lat hir go to feste.
The fourthe day compleet fro noon to
noon,
Whan that the heighe masse was y-doon,
In halle sit this Ianuarie, and May
As fresh as is the brighte someres day.
And so bifel, how that this gode man
Remembred him upon this Damian,
And seyde, 'Seinte Marie! how may
this be,
That Damian entendeth nat to me?
Is he ay syk, or how may this bityde?'
His squyeres, whiche that stoden ther
bisyde,
Excused him by-cause of his siknesse,
Which letted him to doon his bisinesse;
Noon other cause mighte make him
tarie.
'That me forthinketh,' quod this Ianuarie,
'He is a gentil squyer, by my trouthe!
If that he deyde, it were harm and
routhe;
He is as wys, discreet, and as secree
As any man I woot of his degree;
And ther-to manly and eek servisable,
And for to been a thrifty man right able.
But after mete, as sone as ever I may,
I wol my-self visyte him and eek May,
To doon him al the confort that I can.'
And for that word him blessed every
man,
That, of his bountee and his gentillesse,
He wolde so conforten in siknesse
His squyer, for it was a gentil dede.
'Dame,' quod this Ianuarie, 'tak good
hede,
At-after mete ye, with your wommen
alle,
Whan ye han been in chambre out of
this halle,
That alle ye go to see this Damian;
Doth him disport, he is a gentil man;
And telleth him that I wol him visyte,
Have I no-thing but rested me a lyte;
And spede yow faste, for I wole abyde
Til that ye slepe faste by my syde.'
And with that word he gan to him to
calle
A squyer, that was marchal of his halle,
And tolde him certeyn thinges, what he
wolde.
This fresshe May hath streight hir wey
y-holde,
With alle hir wommen, un-to Damian.
Doun by his beddes syde sit she than,
Confortinge him as goodly as she may.
This Damian, whan that his tyme he
say,
In secree wise his purs, and eek his
bille,
In which that he y-writen hadde his
wille,
Hath put in-to hir hand, with-outen
more,
Save that he syketh wonder depe and
sore,
And softely to hir right thus seyde he:
'Mercy! and that ye nat discovere me;
For I am deed, if that this thing be
kid.'
This purs hath she inwith hir bosom hid,
And wente hir wey; ye gete namore of
me.
But un-to Ianuarie y-comen is she,
That on his beddes syde sit ful softe.
He taketh hir, and kisseth hir ful ofte,
And leyde him doun to slepe, and that
anon.
She feyned hir as that she moste gon
Ther-as ye woot that every wight mot
nede.

And whan she of this bille hath taken hede,
She rente it al to cloutes atte laste,
And in the privee softely it caste.
Who studieth now but faire fresshe May?
Adoun by olde Ianuarie she lay,
That sleep, til that the coughe hath him awaked;
Anon he preyde hir strepen hir al naked;
He wolde of hir, he seyde, han som plesaunce,
And seyde, hir clothes dide him encombraunce,
And she obeyeth, be hir lief or looth.
But lest that precious folk be with me wrooth,
How that he wroghte, I dar nat to yow telle;
Or whether hir thoughte it paradys or helle;
But here I lete hem werken in hir wyse
Til evensong rong, and that they moste aryse.
Were it by destinee or aventure,
Were it by influence or by nature,
Or constellacion, that in swich estat
The hevene stood, that tyme fortunat
Was for to putte a bille of Venus werkes
(For alle thing hath tyme, as seyn thise clerkes)
To any womman, for to gete hir love,
I can nat seye; but grete god above,
That knoweth that non act is causelees,
He deme of al, for I wol holde my pees.
But sooth is this, how that this fresshe May
Hath take swich impression that day,
For pitee of this syke Damian,
That from hir herte she ne dryve can
The remembraunce for to doon him ese.
'Certeyn,' thoghte she, 'whom that this thing displese,
I rekke noght, for here I him assure,
To love him best of any creature,
Though he na-more hadde than his sherte.'
Lo, pitee renneth sone in gentil herte.
Heer may ye se how excellent franchyse
In wommen is, whan they hem narwe avyse.
Som tyrant is, as ther be many oon,
That hath an herte as hard as any stoon,
Which wolde han lete him sterven in the place
Wel rather than han graunted him hir grace;
And hem reioysen in hir cruel pryde,
And rekke nat to been an homicyde.
This gentil May, fulfilled of pitee,
Right of hir hande a lettre made she,
In which she graunteth him hir verray grace;
Ther lakketh noght but only day and place,
Wher that she mighte un-to his lust suffyse:
For it shal be right as he wol devyse.
And whan she saugh hir time, up-on a day,
To visite this Damian goth May,
And sotilly this lettre doun she threste
Under his pilwe, rede it if him leste.
She taketh him by the hand, and harde him twiste
So secrely, that no wight of it wiste,
And bad him been al hool, and forth she wente
To Ianuarie, whan that he for hir sente.
Up ryseth Damian the nexte morwe,
Al passed was his siknesse and his sorwe.
He kembeth him, he proyneth him and pyketh,
He dooth al that his lady lust and lyketh;
And eek to Ianuarie he gooth as lowe
As ever dide a dogge for the bowe.
He is so plesant un-to every man,
(For craft is al, who-so that do it can)
That every wight is fayn to speke him good;
And fully in his lady grace he stood.
Thus lete I Damian aboute his nede,
And in my tale forth I wol procede.
Somme clerkes holden that felicitee
Stant in delyt, and therefor certeyn he,
This noble Ianuarie, with al his might,
In honest wyse, as longeth to a knight,
Shoop him to live ful deliciously.
His housinge, his array, as honestly
To his degree was maked as a kinges.
Amonges othere of his honest thinges,
He made a gardin, walled al with stoon;

So fair a gardin woot I nowher noon.
For out of doute, I verraily suppose,
That he that wroot the Romance of the Rose
Ne coude of it the beautee wel devyse;
Ne Priapus ne mighte nat suffyse,
Though he be god of gardins, for to telle
The beautee of the gardin and the welle,
That stood under a laurer alwey grene.
Ful ofte tyme he, Pluto, and his quene,
Proserpina, and al hir fayërye
Disporten hem and maken melodye
Aboute that welle, and daunced, as men tolde.
This noble knight, this Ianuarie the olde,
Swich deintee hath in it to walke and pleye,
That he wol no wight suffren bere the keye
Save he him-self; for of the smale wiket
He bar alwey of silver a smal cliket,
With which, whan that him leste, he it unshette.
And whan he wolde paye his wyf hir dette
In somer seson, thider wolde he go,
And May his wyf, and no wight but they two;
And thinges whiche that were nat doon a-bedde,
He in the gardin parfourned hem and spedde.
And in this wyse, many a mery day,
Lived this Ianuarie and fresshe May.
But worldly Ioye may nat alwey dure
To Ianuarie, ne to no creature.
O sodeyn hap, o thou fortune instable, *Auctor.*
Lyk to the scorpioun so deceivable,
That flaterest with thyn heed when thou wolt stinge;
Thy tayl is deeth, thurgh thyn envenim-inge.
O brotil Ioye! o swete venim queynte!
O monstre, that so subtilly canst peynte
Thy yiftes, under hewe of stedfastnesse,
That thou deceyvest bothe more and lesse!
Why hastow Ianuarie thus deceyved,
That haddest him for thy ful frend receyved?
And now thou hast biraft him bothe hise yën,
For sorwe of which desyreth he to dyen.
Allas! this noble Ianuarie free,
Amidde his lust and his prosperitee,
Is woxen blind, and that al sodeynly.
He wepeth and he wayleth pitously;
And ther-with-al the fyr of Ialousye,
Lest that his wyf sholde falle in som folye,
So brente his herte, that he wolde fayn
That som man bothe him and hir had slayn.
For neither after his deeth, nor in his lyf,
Ne wolde he that she were love ne wyf,
But ever live as widwe in clothes blake,
Soul as the turtle that lost hath hir make.
But atte laste, after a monthe or tweye,
His sorwe gan aswage, sooth to seye;
For whan he wiste it may noon other be,
He paciently took his adversitee;
Save, out of doute, he may nat forgoon
That he nas Ialous evermore in oon;
Which Ialousye it was so outrageous,
That neither in halle, nin noon other hous,
Ne in noon other place, never-the-mo,
He nolde suffre hir for to ryde or go,
But-if that he had hand on hir alway;
For which ful ofte wepeth fresshe May,
That loveth Damian so benignely,
That she mot outher dyen sodeynly,
Or elles she mot han him as hir leste;
She wayteth whan hir herte wolde breste.
Up-on that other syde Damian
Bicomen is the sorwefulleste man
That ever was; for neither night ne day
Ne mighte he speke a word to fresshe May,
As to his purpos, of no swich matere,
But-if that Ianuarie moste it here,
That hadde an hand up-on hir evermo.
But nathelees, by wryting to and fro
And privee signes, wiste he what she mente;
And she knew eek the fyn of his entente.
O Ianuarie, what mighte it thee availle, *Auctor.*
Thou mightest see as fer as shippes saille?
For also good is blind deceyved be,
As be deceyved whan a man may se.
Lo, Argus, which that hadde an hondred yën,
For al that ever he coude poure or pryen,

Yet was he blent; and, god wot, so ben mo,
That wenen wisly that it be nat so.
Passe over is an ese, I sey na-more.
This fresshe May, that I spak of so yore,
In warme wex hath emprented the cliket,
That Ianuarie bar of the smale wiket,
By which in-to his gardin ofte he wente.
And Damian, that knew al hir entente,
The cliket countrefeted prively;
Ther nis na-more to seye, but hastily
Som wonder by this cliket shal bityde,
Which ye shul heren, if ye wole abyde.
O noble Ovyde, ful sooth seystou, god woot! *Auctor.*
What sleighte is it, though it be long and hoot,
That he nil finde it out in som manere?
By Piramus and Tesbee may men lere;
Thogh they were kept ful longe streite overal,
They been accorded, rouninge thurgh a wal,
Ther no wight coude han founde out swich a sleighte.
But now to purpos; er that dayes eighte
Were passed, er the monthe of Iuil, bifil
That Ianuarie hath caught so greet a wil,
Thurgh egging of his wyf, him for to pleye
In his gardin, and no wight but they tweye,
That in a morwe un-to this May seith he:
'Rys up, my wyf, my love, my lady free;
The turtles vois is herd, my douve swete;
The winter is goon, with alle his reynes wete;
Com forth now, with thyn eyën columbyn!
How fairer been thy brestes than is wyn!
The gardin is enclósed al aboute;
Com forth, my whyte spouse; out of doute,
Thou hast me wounded in myn herte, o wyf!
No spot of thee ne knew I al my lyf.
Com forth, and lat us taken our disport;
I chees thee for my wyf and my confort.'
Swiche olde lewed wordes used he;
On Damian a signe made she,
That he sholde go biforen with his cliket:
This Damian thanne hath opened the wiket,
And in he stirte, and that in swich manere,
That no wight mighte it see neither y-here;
And stille he sit under a bush anoon.
This Ianuarie, as blind as is a stoon,
With Maius in his hand, and no wight mo,
In-to his fresshe gardin is ago,
And clapte to the wiket sodeynly.
'Now, wyf,' quod he, 'heer nis but thou and I,
That art the creature that I best love.
For, by that lord that sit in heven above,
Lever ich hadde dyen on a knyf,
Than thee offende, trewe dere wyf!
For goddes sake, thenk how I thee chees,
Noght for no coveityse, doutelees,
But only for the love I had to thee.
And though that I be old, and may nat see,
Beth to me trewe, and I shal telle yow why.
Three thinges, certes, shul ye winne ther-by;
First, love of Crist, and to your-self honour,
And al myn heritage, toun and tour;
I yeve it yow, maketh chartres as yow leste;
This shal be doon to-morwe er sonne reste.
So wisly god my soule bringe in blisse,
I prey yow first, in covenant ye me kisse.
And thogh that I be Ialous, wyte me noght.
Ye been so depe enprented in my thoght,
That, whan that I considere your beautee,
And ther-with-al the unlykly elde of me,
I may nat, certes, thogh I sholde dye,
Forbere to been out of your companye
For verray love; this is with-outen doute.
Now kis me, wyf, and lat us rome aboute.'
This fresshe May, whan she thise wordes herde,
Benignely to Ianuarie answerde,
But first and forward she bigan to wepe,
'I have,' quod she, 'a soule for to kepe
As wel as ye, and also myn honour,
And of my wyfhod thilke tendre flour,
Which that I have assured in your hond,
Whan that the preest to yow my body bond;
Wherfore I wole answere in this manere

By the leve of yow, my lord so dere: 2194
I prey to god, that never dawe the day
That I ne sterve, as foule as womman may,
If ever I do un-to my kin that shame,
Or elles I empeyre so my name,
That I be fals; and if I do that lakke,
Do strepe me and put me in a sakke, 2200
And in the nexte river do me drenche.
I am a gentil womman and no wenche.
Why speke ye thus? but men ben ever untrewe,
And wommen have repreve of yow ay newe.
Ye han non other contenance, I leve, 2205
But speke to us of untrust and repreve.'
And with that word she saugh wher Damian
Sat in the busb, and coughen she bigan,
And with her finger signes made she, 2209
That Damian sholde climbe up-on a tree,
That charged was with fruit, and up he wente;
For verraily he knew al hir entente,
And every signe that she coude make
Wel bet than Ianuarie, hir owene make
For in a lettre she had told him al 2215
Of this matere, how he werchen shal.
And thus I lete him sitte up-on the pyrie,
And Ianuarie and May rominge myrie.
Bright was the day, and blew the firmament, 2219
Phebus of gold his stremes doun hath sent,
To gladen every flour with his warmnesse.
He was that tyme *in Geminis*, as I gesse,
But litel fro his declinacioun
Of Cancer, Iovis exaltacioun. 2224
And so bifel, that brighte morwe-tyde,
That in that gardin, in the ferther syde,
Pluto, that is the king of fayërye,
And many a lady in his companye,
Folwinge his wyf, the quene Proserpyne,
Ech after other, right as any lyne — 2230
Whil that she gadered floures in the mede,
In Claudian ye may the story rede,
How in his grisly carte he hir fette: —
This king of fairye thanne adoun him sette
Up-on a bench of turves, fresh and grene,
And right anon thus seyde he to his quene. 2236
'My wyf,' quod he, 'ther may no wight sey nay;
Thexperience so preveth every day
The treson whiche that wommen doon to man.
Ten hondred thousand [stories] telle I can 2240
Notable of your untrouthe and brotilnesse.
O Salomon, wys, richest of richesse,
Fulfild of sapience and of worldly glorie,
Ful worthy been thy wordes to memorie
To every wight that wit and reson can. 2245
Thus preiseth he yet the bountee of man:
"Amonges a thousand men yet fond I oon,
But of wommen alle fond I noon."
Thus seith the king that knoweth your wikkednesse;
And Iesus *filius Syrak*, as I gesse, 2250
Ne speketh of yow but selde reverence.
A wilde fyr and corrupt pestilence
So falle up-on your bodies yet to-night!
Ne see ye nat this honurable knight,
By-cause, allas! that he is blind and old, 2255
His owene man shal make him cokewold;
Lo heer he sit, the lechour, in the tree.
Now wol I graunten, of my magestee,
Un-to this olde blinde worthy knight
That he shal have ayeyn his eyen sight,
Whan that his wyf wold doon him vileinye; 2261
Than shal he knowen al hir harlotrye
Both in repreve of hir and othere mo.'
'Ye shal,' quod Proserpyne, 'wol ye so;
Now, by my modres sires soule I swere, 2265
That I shal yeven hir suffisant answere,
And alle wommen after, for hir sake;
That, though they be in any gilt y-take,
With face bold they shulle hem-self excuse,
And bere hem doun that wolden hem accuse. 2270
For lakke of answer, noon of hem shal dyen.
Al hadde man seyn a thing with bothe his yën,
Yit shul we wommen visage it hardily,
And wepe, and swere, and chyde subtilly,
So that ye men shul been as lewed as gees. 2275
What rekketh me of your auctoritees?
I woot wel that this Iew, this Salomon,
Fond of us wommen foles many oon.

But though that he ne fond no good womman,
Yet hath ther founde many another man
Wommen ful trewe, ful gode, and vertuous.
Witnesse on hem that dwelle in Cristes hous,
With martirdom they preved hir constance.
The Romayn gestes maken remembrance
Of many a verray trewe wyf also.
But sire, ne be nat wrooth, al-be-it so,
Though that he seyde he fond no good womman,
I prey yow take the sentence of the man;
He mente thus, that in sovereyn bontee
Nis noon but god, that sit in Trinitee.
Ey! for verray god, that nis but oon,
What make ye so muche of Salomon?
What though he made a temple, goddes hous?
What though he were riche and glorious?
So made he eek a temple of false goddis,
How mighte he do a thing that more forbode is?
Pardee, as faire as ye his name emplastre,
He was a lechour and an ydolastre;
And in his elde he verray god forsook.
And if that god ne hadde, as seith the book,
Y-spared him for his fadres sake, he sholde
Have lost his regne rather than he wolde.
I sette noght of al the vileinye,
That ye of wommen wryte, a boterflye.
I am a womman, nedes moot I speke,
Or elles swelle til myn herte breke.
For sithen he seyde that we ben Iangleresses,
As ever hool I mote brouke my tresses,
I shal nat spare, for no curteisye,
To speke him harm that wolde us vileinye.'
'Dame,' quod this Pluto, 'be no lenger wrooth;
I yeve it up; but sith I swoor myn ooth
That I wolde graunten him his sighte ageyn,
My word shal stonde, I warne yow, certeyn.
I am a king, it sit me noght to lye.'
'And I,' quod she, 'a queene of fayërye.
Hir answere shal she have, I undertake;
Lat us na-more wordes heer-of make.
For sothe, I wol no lenger yow contrarie.'
Now lat us turne agayn to Ianuarie,
That in the gardin with his faire May
Singeth, ful merier than the papeiay,
'Yow love I best, and shal, and other noon.'
So longe aboute the aleyes is he goon,
Til he was come agaynes thilke pyrie,
Wher-as this Damian sitteth ful myrie
An heigh, among the fresshe leves grene.
This fresshe May, that is so bright and shene,
Gan for to syke, and seyde, 'allas, my syde!
Now sir,' quod she, 'for aught that may bityde,
I moste han of the peres that I see,
Or I mot dye, so sore longeth me
To eten of the smale peres grene.
Help, for hir love that is of hevene quene!
I telle yow wel, a womman in my plyt
May han to fruit so greet an appetyt,
That she may dyen, but she of it have.'
'Allas!' quod he, 'that I ne had heer a knave
That coude climbe; allas! allas!' quod he,
'That I am blind.' 'Ye, sir, no fors,' quod she:
'But wolde ye vouche-sauf, for goddes sake,
The pyrie inwith your armes for to take,
(For wel I woot that ye mistruste me)
Thanne sholde I climbe wel y-nogh,' quod she,
'So I my foot mighte sette upon your bak.'
'Certes,' quod he, 'ther-on shal be no lak,
Mighte I yow helpen with myn herte blood.'
He stoupeth doun, and on his bak she stood,
And caughte her by a twiste, and up she gooth.

Ladies, I prey yow that ye be nat wrooth;
I can nat glose, I am a rude man.
And sodeynly anon this Damian
Gan pullen up the smok, and in he throng.
And whan that Pluto saugh this grete wrong,
To Ianuarie he gaf agayn his sighte,
And made him see, as wel as ever he mighte.
And whan that he hadde caught his sighte agayn,
Ne was ther never man of thing so fayn.
But on his wyf his thoght was evermo;
Up to the tree he caste his eyen two,
And saugh that Damian his wyf had dressed
In swich manere, it may nat ben expressed
But if I wolde speke uncurteisly:
And up he yaf a roring and a cry
As doth the moder whan the child shal dye:
'Out! help! allas! harrow!' he gan to crye,
'O stronge lady store, what dostow?'
And she answerde, 'sir, what eyleth yow?
Have pacience, and reson in your minde,
I have yow holpe on bothe your eyen blinde.
Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lyen,
As me was taught, to hele with your yën,
Was no-thing bet to make yow to see
Than strugle with a man up-on a tree.
God woot, I dide it in ful good entente.'
'Strugle!' quod he, 'ye, algate in it wente!
God yeve yow bothe on shames deeth to dyen!
He swyved thee, I saugh it with myne yën,
And elles be I hanged by the hals!'
'Thanne is,' quod she, 'my medicyne al fals;
For certeinly, if that ye mighte see,
Ye wolde nat seyn thise wordes un-to me;
Ye han som glimsing and no parfit sighte.'
'I see,' quod he, 'as wel as ever I mighte,
Thonked be god! with bothe myne eyen two,
And by my trouthe, me thoughte he dide thee so.'
'Ye maze, maze, gode sire,' quod she,
'This thank have I for I have maad yow see;
Allas!' quod she, 'that ever I was so kinde!'
'Now, dame,' quod he, 'lat al passe out of minde.
Com doun, my lief, and if I have missayd,
God help me so, as I am yvel apayd.
But, by my fader soule, I wende han seyn,
How that this Damian had by thee leyn,
And that thy smok had leyn up-on his brest.'
'Ye, sire,' quod she, 'ye may wene as yow lest;
But, sire, a man that waketh out of his sleep,
He may nat sodeynly wel taken keep
Up-on a thing, ne seen it parfitly,
Til that he be adawed verraily;
Right so a man, that longe hath blind y-be,
Ne may nat sodeynly so wel y-see,
First whan his sighte is newe come ageyn,
As he that hath a day or two y-seyn.
Til that your sighte y-satled be a whyle,
Ther may ful many a sighte yow bigyle.
Beth war, I prey yow; for, by hevene king,
Ful many a man weneth to seen a thing,
And it is al another than it semeth.
He that misconceyveth, he misdemeth.'
And with that word she leep doun fro the tree.
This Ianuarie, who is glad but he?
He kisseth hir, and clippeth hir ful ofte,
And on hir wombe he stroketh hir ful softe,
And to his palays hoom he hath hir lad.
Now, gode men, I pray yow to be glad.
Thus endeth heer my tale of Ianuarie;
God blesse us and his moder Seinte Marie!

Here is ended the Marchantes Tale of Ianuarie.

EPILOGUE TO THE MARCHANTES TALE.

'Ey! goddes mercy!' seyde our Hoste tho,
'Now swich a wyf I pray god kepe me fro!
Lo, whiche sleightes and subtilitees
In wommen been! for ay as bisy as bees
Ben they, us sely men for to deceyve,
And from a sothe ever wol they weyve;
By this Marchauntes Tale it preveth weel.
But doutelees, as trewe as any steel
I have a wyf, though that she povre be;
But of hir tonge a labbing shrewe is she,
And yet she hath an heap of vyces mo;
Ther-of no fors, lat alle swiche thinges go.
But, wite ye what? in conseil be it seyd,
Me reweth sore I am un-to hir teyd.
For, and I sholde rekenen every vyce
Which that she hath, y-wis, I were to nyce,
And cause why; it sholde reported be
And told to hir of somme of this meynee;
Of whom, it nedeth nat for to declare,
Sin wommen connen outen swich chaffare;
And eek my wit suffyseth nat ther-to
To tellen al; wherfor my tale is do.'

GROUP F.

THE SQUIERES TALE.

[THE SQUIRE'S PROLOGUE.]

'SQUIER, com neer, if it your wille be,
And sey somwhat of love; for, certes, ye
Connen ther-on as muche as any man.'
'Nay, sir,' quod he, 'but I wol seye as I can
With hertly wille; for I wol nat rebelle
Agayn your lust; a tale wol I telle.
Have me excused if I speke amis,
My wil is good; and lo, my tale is this.

Here biginneth the Squieres Tale.

At Sarray, in the land of Tartarye,
Ther dwelte a king, that werreyed Russye,
Thurgh which ther deyde many a doughty man.
This noble king was cleped Cambinskan,
Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun
That ther nas no-wher in no regioun
So excellent a lord in alle thing;
Him lakked noght that longeth to a king.
As of the secte of which that he was born
He kepte his lay, to which that he was sworn;
And ther-to he was hardy, wys, and riche,
And piëtous and Iust, alwey y-liche.
Sooth of his word, benigne and honurable,
Of his corage as any centre stable;
Yong, fresh, and strong, in armes desirous
As any bacheler of al his hous.
A fair persone he was and fortunat,
And kepte alwey so wel royal estat,
That ther was nowher swich another man.
This noble king, this Tartre Cambinskan
Hadde two sones on Elpheta his wyf,
Of whiche the eldeste highte Algarsyf,
That other sone was cleped Cambalo.
A doghter hadde this worthy king also,
That yongest was, and highte Canacee.
But for to telle yow al hir beautee,
It lyth nat in my tonge, nin my conning;

I dar nat undertake so heigh a thing.
Myn English eek is insufficient;
It moste been a rethor excellent,
That coude his colours longing for that art,
If he sholde hir discryven every part.
I am non swich, I moot speke as I can.
And so bifel that, whan this Cambinskan
Hath twenty winter born his diademe,
As he was wont fro yeer to yeer, I deme,
He leet the feste of his nativitee
Don cryen thurghout Sarray his citee,
The last Idus of March, after the yeer.
Phebus the sonne ful Ioly was and cleer;
For he was neigh his exaltacioun
In Martes face, and in his mansioun
In aries, the colerik hote signe.
Ful lusty was the weder and benigne,
For whiche the foules, agayn the sonne shene,
What for the seson and the yonge grene,
Ful loude songen hir affecciouns;
Him semed han geten hem protecciouns
Agayn the swerd of winter kene and cold.
This Cambinskan, of which I have yow told,
In royal vestiment sit on his deys,
With diademe, ful heighe in his paleys,
And halt his feste, so solempne and so riche
That in this world ne was ther noon it liche.
Of which if I shal tellen al tharray,
Than wolde it occupye a someres day;
And eek it nedeth nat for to devyse
At every cours the ordre of hir servyse.
I wol nat tellen of hir strange sewes,
Ne of hir swannes, ne of hir heronsewes.
Eek in that lond, as tellen knightes olde,
Ther is som mete that is ful deyntee holde,
That in this lond men recche of it but smal;
Ther nis no man that may reporten al.
I wol nat tarien yow, for it is pryme,
And for it is no fruit but los of tyme;
Un-to my firste I wol have my recours.
And so bifel that, after the thridde cours,
Whyl that this king sit thus in his nobleye,
Herkninge his minstralles hir thinges pleye
Biforn him at the bord deliciously,
In at the halle-dore al sodeynly
Ther cam a knight up-on a stede of bras,
And in his hand a brood mirour of glas.
Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ring,
And by his syde a naked swerd hanging;
And up he rydeth to the heighe bord.
In al the halle ne was ther spoke a word
For merveille of this knight; him to biholde
Ful busily ther wayten yonge and olde.
This strange knight, that cam thus sodeynly,
Al armed save his heed ful richely,
Saluëth king and queen, and lordes alle,
By ordre, as they seten in the halle,
With so heigh reverence and obeisaunce
As wel in speche as in contenaunce,
That Gawain, with his olde curteisye,
Though he were come ageyn out of Fairye,
Ne coude him nat amende with a word.
And after this, biforn the heighe bord,
He with a manly voys seith his message,
After the forme used in his langage,
With-outen vyce of sillable or of lettre;
And, for his tale sholde seme the bettre,
Accordant to his wordes was his chere,
As techeth art of speche hem that it lere;
Al-be-it that I can nat soune his style,
Ne can nat climben over so heigh a style,
Yet seye I this, as to commune entente,
Thus muche amounteth al that ever he mente,
If it so be that I have it in minde.
He seyde, 'the king of Arabie and of Inde,
My lige lord, on this solempne day
Saluëth yow as he best can and may,
And sendeth yow, in honour of your feste,
By me, that am al redy at your heste,
This stede of bras, that esily and wel
Can, in the space of o day naturel,
This is to seyn, in foure and twenty houres,

Wher-so yow list, in droghte or elles shoures,
Beren your body in-to every place
To which your herte wilneth for to pace
With-outen wem of yow, thurgh foul or fair;
Or, if yow list to fleen as hye in the air
As doth an egle, whan him list to sore,
This same stede shal bere yow ever-more
With-outen harm, til ye be ther yow leste,
Though that ye slepen on his bak or reste;
And turne ayeyn, with wrything of a pin.
He that it wroghte coude ful many a gin;
He wayted many a constellacioun
Er he had doon this operacioun;
And knew ful many a seel and many a bond.
This mirour eek, that I have in myn hond,
Hath swich a might, that men may in it see
Whan ther shal fallen any adversitee
Un-to your regne or to your-self also;
And openly who is your freend or foo.
And over al this, if any lady bright
Hath set hir herte on any maner wight,
If he be fals, she shal his treson see,
His newe love and al his subtiltee
So openly, that ther shal no-thing hyde.
Wherfor, ageyn this lusty someres tyde,
This mirour and this ring, that ye may see,
He hath sent to my lady Canacee,
Your excellente doghter that is here.
The vertu of the ring, if ye wol here,
Is this; that, if hir lust it for to were
Up-on hir thombe, or in hir purs it bere,
Ther is no foul that fleeth under the hevene
That she ne shal wel understonde his stevene,
And knowe his mening openly and pleyn,
And answere him in his langage ageyn.
And every gras that groweth up-on rote
She shal eek knowe, and whom it wol do bote,
Al be his woundes never so depe and wyde.
This naked swerd, that hangeth by my syde,
Swich vertu hath, that what man so ye smyte,
Thurgh-out his armure it wol kerve and byte,
Were it as thikke as is a branched ook;
And what man that is wounded with the strook
Shal never be hool til that yow list, of grace,
To stroke him with the platte in thilke place
Ther he is hurt: this is as muche to seyn,
Ye mote with the platte swerd ageyn
Stroke him in the wounde, and it wol close;
This is a verray sooth, with-outen glose,
It failleth nat whyl it is in your hold.'
And whan this knight hath thus his tale told,
He rydeth out of halle, and doun he lighte.
His stede, which that shoon as sonne brighte,
Stant in the court, as stille as any stoon.
This knight is to his chambre lad anon,
And is unarmed and to mete y-set.
The presentes ben ful royally y-fet,
This is to seyn, the swerd and the mirour,
And born anon in-to the heighe tour
With certeine officers ordeyned therfore;
And un-to Canacee this ring was bore
Solempnely, ther she sit at the table.
But sikerly, with-outen any fable,
The hors of bras, that may nat be remewed,
It stant as it were to the ground y-glewed.
Ther may no man out of the place it dryve
For noon engyn of windas or polyve;
And cause why, for they can nat the craft.
And therefore in the place they han it laft
Til that the knight hath taught hem the manere
To voyden him, as ye shal after here.
Greet was the prees that swarmeth to and fro,
To gauren on this hors that stondeth so;
For it so heigh was, and so brood and long,

So wel proporcioned for to ben strong,
Right as it were a stede of Lumbardye;
Ther-with so horsly, and so quik of yë
As it a gentil Poileys courser were.
For certes, fro his tayl un-to his ere,
Nature ne art ne coude him nat amende
In no degree, as al the peple wende.
But evermore hir moste wonder was,
How that it coude goon, and was of bras;
It was of Fairye, as the peple semed.
Diverse folk diversely they demed;
As many hedes, as many wittes ther been.
They murmureden as dooth a swarm of been,
And maden skiles after hir fantasyes,
Rehersinge of thise olde poetryes,
And seyden, it was lyk the Pegasee,
The hors that hadde winges for to flee;
Or elles it was the Grekes hors Synon,
That broghte Troye to destruccion,
As men may in thise olde gestes rede.
'Myn herte,' quod oon, 'is evermore in drede;
I trowe som men of armes been ther-inne,
That shapen hem this citee for to winne.
It were right good that al swich thing were knowe.'
Another rowned to his felawe lowe,
And seyde, 'he lyeth, it is rather lyk
An apparence y-maad by som magyk,
As Iogelours pleyen at thise festes grete.'
Of sondry doutes thus they Iangle and trete,
As lewed peple demeth comunly
Of thinges that ben maad more subtilly
Than they can in her lewednes comprehende;
They demen gladly to the badder ende.
And somme of hem wondred on the mirour,
That born was up in-to the maister-tour,
How men mighte in it swiche thinges see.
Another answerde, and seyde it mighte wel be
Naturelly, by composicioums
Of angles and of slye reflexioums,
And seyden, that in Rome was swich oon.
They speken of Alocen and Vitulon,
And Aristotle, that writen in hir lyves
Of queynte mirours and of prospectyves,
As knowen they that han hir bokes herd.
And othere folk han wondred on the swerd
That wolde percen thurgh-out every-thing;
And fille in speche of Thelophus the king,
And of Achilles with his queynte spere,
For he coude with it bothe hele and dere,
Right in swich wyse as men may with the swerd
Of which right now ye han your-selven herd.
They speken of sondry harding of metal,
And speke of medicynes ther-with-al,
And how, and whanne, it sholde y-harded be;
Which is unknowe algates unto me.
Tho speke they of Canaceës ring,
And seyden alle, that swich a wonder thing
Of craft of ringes herde they never non,
Save that he, Moyses, and king Salomon
Hadde a name of konning in swich art.
Thus seyn the peple, and drawen hem apart.
But nathelees, somme seyden that it was
Wonder to maken of fern-asshen glas,
And yet nis glas nat lyk asshen of fern;
But for they han y-knowen it so fern,
Therfore cesseth her Iangling and her wonder.
As sore wondren somme on cause of thonder,
On ebbe, on flood, on gossomer, and on mist,
And alle thing, til that the cause is wist.
Thus Iangle they and demen and devyse,
Til that the king gan fro the bord aryse.
Phebus hath laft the angle meridional,
And yet ascending was the beest royal,
The gentil Leon, with his Aldiaan
Whan that this Tartre king, this Cambinskan,
Roos fro his bord, ther that he sat ful hye.
Toforn him gooth the loude minstralcye,

Til he cam to his chambre of parements,
Ther as they sownen diverse instruments,
That it is lyk an heven for to here. 271
Now dauncen lusty Venus children dere,
For in the Fish hir lady sat ful hye,
And loketh on hem with a freendly yë.
This noble king is set up in his trone. 275
This strange knight is fet to him ful sone,
And on the daunce he gooth with Canacee.
Heer is the revel and the Iolitee
That is nat able a dul man to devyse.
He moste han knowen love and his servyse, 280
And been a festlich man as fresh as May,
That sholde yow devysen swich array.
Who coude telle yow the forme of dauncs,
So uncouthe and so fresshe contenaunces,
Swich subtil loking and dissimulinges 285
For drede of Ialouse mennes aperceyvinges?
No man but Launcelot, and he is deed.
Therefor I passe of al this lustiheed;
I seye na-more, but in this Iolynesse
I lete hem, til men to the soper dresse. 290
The styward bit the spyces for to hye,
And eek the wyn, in al this melodye.
The usshers and the squyers ben y-goon;
The spyces and the wyn is come anoon.
They ete and drinke; and whan this hadde an ende, 295
Un-to the temple, as reson was, they wende.
The service doon, they soupen al by day.
What nedeth yow rehercen hir array?
Ech man wot wel, that at a kinges feeste
Hath plentee, to the moste and to the leeste, 300
And deyntees mo than been in my knowing.
At-after soper gooth this noble king
To seen this hors of bras, with al the route
Of lordes and of ladyes him aboute.
Swich wondring was ther on this hors of bras 305
That, sin the grete sege of Troye was,
Ther-as men wondreden on an hors also,
Ne was ther swich a wondring as was tho.
But fynally the king axeth this knight
The vertu of this courser and the might,
And preyede him to telle his governaunce. 311
This hors anoon bigan to trippe and daunce,
Whan that this knight leyde hand up-on his reyne,
And seyde, 'sir, ther is na-more to seyne,
But, whan yow list to ryden anywhere, 315
Ye moten trille a pin, stant in his ere,
Which I shall telle yow bitwix vs two.
Ye mote nempne him to what place also
Or to what contree that yow list to ryde.
And whan ye come ther as yow list abyde, 320
Bidde him descende, and trille another pin,
For ther-in lyth the effect of al the gin,
And he wol doun descende and doon your wille;
And in that place he wol abyde stille,
Though al the world the contrarie hadde y-swore; 325
He shal nat thennes ben y-drawe ne y-bore.
Or, if yow liste bidde him thennes goon,
Trille this pin, and he wol vanishe anoon
Out of the sighte of every maner wight,
And come agayn, be it by day or night, 330
When that yow list to clepen him ageyn
In swich a gyse as I shal to yow seyn
Bitwixe yow and me, and that ful sone.
Ryde whan yow list, ther is na-more to done.'
Enformed whan the king was of that knight, 335
And hath conceyved in his wit aright
The maner and the forme of al this thing,
Thus glad and blythe, this noble doughty king
Repeireth to his revel as biforn.
The brydel is un-to the tour y-born, 340
And kept among his Iewels leve and dere.
The hors vanisshed, I noot in what manere,
Out of hir sighte; ye gete na-more of me.
But this I lete in lust and Iolitee
This Cambynskan his lordes festeyinge,
Til wel ny the day bigan to springe. 346

Explicit prima pars. Sequitur pars secunda.

The norice of digestioun, the slepe,
Gan on hem winke, and bad hem taken kepe,
That muchel drink and labour wolde han reste;
And with a galping mouth hem alle he keste,
And seyde, 'it was tyme to lye adoun,
For blood was in his dominacioun;
Cherissheth blood, natures freend,' quod he.
They thanken him galpinge, by two, by three,
And every wight gan drawe him to his reste,
As slepe hem bad; they toke it for the beste.
Hir dremes shul nat been y-told for me;
Ful were hir hedes of fumositee,
That causeth dreem, of which ther nis no charge.
They slepen til that it was pryme large,
The moste part, but it were Canacee;
She was ful mesurable, as wommen be.
For of hir fader hadde she take leve
To gon to reste, sone after it was eve;
Hir liste nat appalled for to be,
Nor on the morwe unfestlich for to see;
And slepte hir firste sleep, and thanne awook.
For swich a Ioye she in hir herte took
Both of hir queynte ring and hir mirour,
That twenty tyme she changed hir colour;
And in hir slepe, right for impressioun
Of hir mirour, she hadde a visioun.
Wherfore, er that the sonne gan up glyde,
She cleped on hir maistresse hir bisyde,
And seyde, that hir liste for to ryse.
Thise olde wommen that been gladly wyse,
As is hir maistresse, answerde hir anoon,
And seyde, 'madame, whider wil ye goon
Thus erly? for the folk ben alle on reste.'
'I wol,' quod she, 'aryse, for me leste
No lenger for to slepe, and walke aboute.'
Hir maistresse clepeth wommen a gret route,
And up they rysen, wel a ten or twelve;
Up ryseth fresshe Canacee hir-selve,
As rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne,
That in the Ram is four degrees up-ronne;
Noon hyer was he, whan she redy was;
And forth she walketh esily a pas,
Arrayed after the lusty seson sote
Lightly, for to pleye and walke on fote;
Nat but with fyve or six of hir meynee;
And in a trench, forth in the park, goth she.
The vapour, which that fro the erthe glood,
Made the sonne to seme rody and brood;
But nathelees, it was so fair a sighte
That it made alle hir hertes for to lighte,
What for the seson and the morweninge,
And for the foules that she herde singe;
For right anon she wiste what they mente
Right by hir song, and knew al hir entente.
The knotte, why that every tale is told,
If it be taried til that lust be cold
Of hem that han it after herkned yore,
The savour passeth ever lenger the more,
For fulsomnesse of his prolixitee.
And by the same reson thinketh me,
I sholde to the knotte condescende,
And maken of hir walking sone an ende.
Amidde a tree fordrye, as whyt as chalk,
As Canacee was pleying in hir walk,
Ther sat a faucon over hir heed ful hye,
That with a pitous voys so gan to crye
That all the wode resouned of hir cry.
Y-beten hath she hir-self so pitously
With bothe hir winges, til the rede blood
Ran endelong the tree ther-as she stood.
And ever in oon she cryde alwey and shrighte,
And with hir beek hir-selven so she prighte,
That ther nis tygre, ne noon so cruel beste,
That dwelleth either in wode or in foreste
That nolde han wept, if that he wepe coude,
For sorwe of hir, she shrighte alwey so loude.
For ther nas never yet no man on lyve —
If that I coude a faucon wel discryve —
That herde of swich another of fairnesse,
As wel of plumage as of gentillesse
Of shap, and al that mighte y-rekened be.
A faucon peregryn than semed she

Of fremde land; and evermore, as she stood,
She swowneth now and now for lakke of blood,
Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.
This faire kinges doghter, Canacee,
That on hir finger bar the queynte ring,
Thurgh which she understood wel every thing
That any foul may in his ledene seyn,
And coude answere him in his ledene ageyn,
Hath understonde what this faucon seyde,
And wel neigh for the rewthe almost she deyde.
And to the tree she gooth ful hastily,
And on this faucon loketh pitously,
And heeld hir lappe abrood, for wel she wiste
The faucon moste fallen fro the twiste,
When that it swowned next, for lakke of blood.
A longe while to wayten hir she stood
Till atte laste she spak in this manere
Un-to the hauk, as ye shul after here.
'What is the cause, if it be for to telle,
That ye be in this furial pyne of helle?'
Quod Canacee un-to this hauk above.
'Is this for sorwe of deeth or los of love?
For, as I trowe, thise ben causes two
That causen moost a gentil herte wo;
Of other harm it nedeth nat to speke.
For ye your-self upon your-self yow wreke,
Which proveth wel, that either love or drede
Mot been encheson of your cruel dede,
Sin that I see non other wight yow chace.
For love of god, as dooth your-selven grace
Or what may ben your help; for west nor eest
Ne sey I never er now no brid ne beest
That ferde with him-self so pitously.
Ye slee me with your sorwe, verraily;
I have of yow so gret compassioun.
For goddes love, com fro the tree adoun;
And, as I am a kinges doghter trewe,
If that I verrailly the cause knewe
Of your disese, if it lay in my might,
I wolde amende it, er that it were night,
As wisly helpe me gret god of kinde!
And herbes shal I right y-nowe y-finde
To hele with your hurtes hastily.'
Tho shrighte this faucon more pitously
Than ever she dide, and fil to grounde anoon,
And lyth aswowne, deed, and lyk a stoon,
Til Canacee hath in hir lappe hir take
Un-to the tyme she gan of swough awake.
And, after that she of hir swough gan breyde,
Right in hir haukes ledene thus she seyde: —
'That pitee renneth sone in gentil herte,
Feling his similitude in peynes smerte,
Is preved al-day, as men may it see,
As wel by werk as by auctoritee;
For gentil herte kytheth gentillesse.
I see wel, that ye han of my distresse
Compassioun, my faire Canacee,
Of verray wommanly benignitee
That nature in your principles hath set.
But for non hope for to fare the bet,
But for to obeye un-to your herte free,
And for to maken other be war by me,
As by the whelp chasted is the leoun,
Right for that cause and that conclusioun,
Whyl that I have a leyser and a space,
Myn harm I wol confessen, er I pace.'
And ever, whyl that oon hir sorwe tolde,
That other weep, as she to water wolde,
Til that the faucon bad hir to be stille;
And, with a syk, right thus she seyde hir wille.
'Ther I was bred (allas! that harde day!)
And fostred in a roche of marbul gray
So tendrely, that nothing eyled me,
I niste nat what was adversitee,
Til I coude flee ful hye under the sky.
Tho dwelte a tercelet me faste by,
That semed welle of alle gentillesse;
Al were he ful of treson and falsnesse,
It was so wrapped under humble chere,
And under hewe of trouthe in swich manere,
Under plesance, and under bisy peyne,
That no wight coude han wend he coude feyne,

So depe in greyn he dyed his coloures.
Right as a serpent hit him under floures
Til he may seen his tyme for to byte,
Right so this god of love, this ypocryte,
Doth so his cerimonies and obeisaunces,
And kepeth in semblant alle his observances 516
Than sowneth in-to gentillesse of love.
As in a toumbe is al the faire above,
And under is the corps, swich as ye woot,
Swich was this ypocryte, bothe cold and hoot, 520
And in this wyse he served his entente,
That (save the feend) non wiste what he mente.
Til he so longe had wopen and compleyned,
And many a yeer his service to me feyned,
Til that myn herte, to pitous and to nyce,
Al innocent of his crouned malice, 526
For-fered of his deeth, as thoughte me,
Upon his othes and his seuretee,
Graunted him love, on this condicioun,
That evermore myn honour and renoun
Were saved, bothe privee and apert; 531
This is to seyn, that, after his desert,
I yaf him al myn herte and al my thoght —
God woot and he, that otherwyse noght —
And took his herte in chaunge for myn for ay. 535
But sooth is seyd, gon sithen many a day,
"A trew wight and a theef thenken nat oon."
And, whan he saugh the thing so fer y-goon,
That I had graunted him fully my love,
In swich a gyse as I have seyd above, 540
And yeven him my trewe herte, as free
As he swoor he his herte yaf to me;
Anon this tygre, ful of doublenesse,
Fil on his knees with so devout humblesse,
With so heigh reverence, and, as by his chere, 545
So lyk a gentil lovere of manere,
So ravisshed, as it semed, for the Ioye,
That never Iason, ne Parys of Troye,
Iason? certes, ne non other man,
Sin Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan 550
To loven two, as writen folk biforn,
Ne never, sin the firste man was born,
Ne coude man, by twenty thousand part,
Countrefete the sophimes of his art;
Ne were worthy unbokele his galoche, 555
Ther doublenesse or feyning sholde approche,
Ne so coude thanke a wight as he did me!
His maner was an heven for to see
Til any womman, were she never so wys;
So peynted he and kembde at point-devys
As wel his wordes as his contenaunce. 561
And I so lovede him for his obeisaunce,
And for the trouthe I demed in his herte,
That, if so were that any thing him smerte, 564
Al were it never so lyte, and I it wiste,
Me thoughte, I felte deeth myn herte twiste.
And shortly, so ferforth this thing is went,
That my wil was his willes instrument;
This is to seyn, my wil obeyed his wil
In alle thing, as fer as reson fil, 570
Keping the boundes of my worship ever.
Ne never hadde I thing so leef, ne lever,
As him, god woot! ne never shal na-mo.
This lasteth lenger than a yeer or two,
That I supposed of him noght but good.
But fynally, thus atte laste it stood, 576
That fortune wolde that he moste twinne
Out of that place which that I was inne.
Wher me was wo, that is no questioun;
I can nat make of it discripcioun; 580
For o thing dar I tellen boldely,
I knowe what is the peyne of deth therby;
Swich harm I felte for he ne mighte bileve.
So on a day of me he took his leve, 584
So sorwefully eek, that I wende verraily
That he had felt as muche harm as I,
Whan that I herde him speke, and saugh his hewe.
But nathelees, I thoughte he was so trewe,
And eek that he repaire sholde ageyn
With-inne a litel whyle, sooth to seyn;
And reson wolde eek that he moste go 591
For his honour, as ofte it happeth so,
That I made vertu of necessitee,
And took it wel, sin that it moste be.
As I best mighte, I hidde fro him my sorwe, 595

And took him by the hond, seint Iohn to borwe,
And seyde him thus: "lo, I am youres al;
Beth swich as I to yow have been, and shal."
What he answerde, it nedeth noght reherce,
Who can sey bet than he, who can do werse?
Whan he hath al wel seyd, thanne hath he doon.
"Therefor bihoveth him a ful long spoon
That shal ete with a feend," thus herde I seye.
So atte laste he moste forth his weye,
And forth he fleeth, til he cam ther him leste.
Whan it cam him to purpos for to reste,
I trowe he hadde thilke text in minde,
That "alle thing, repeiring to his kinde,
Gladeth him-self"; thus seyn men, as I gesse;
Men loven of propre kinde newfangelnesse,
As briddes doon that men in cages fede.
For though thou night and day take of hem hede,
And strawe hir cage faire and softe as silk,
And yeve hem sugre, hony, breed and milk,
Yet right anon, as that his doré is uppe,
He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe,
And to the wode he wol and wormes ete;
So newefangel been they of hir mete,
And loven novelryes of propre kinde;
No gentillesse of blood [ne] may hem binde.
So ferde this tercelet, allas the day!
Though he were gentil born, and fresh and gay,
And goodly for to seen, and humble and free,
He saugh up-on a tyme a kyte flee,
And sodeynly he loved this kyte so,
That al his love is clene fro me ago,
And hath his trouthe falsed in this wyse;
Thus hath the kyte my love in hir servyse,
And I am lorn with-outen remedye!'
And with that word this faucon gan to crye,
And swowned eft in Canaceës barme.
Greet was the sorwe, for the haukes harme,
That Canacee and alle hir wommen made;
They niste how they mighte the faucon glade.
But Canacee hom bereth hir in hir lappe,
And softely in plastres gan hir wrappe,
Ther as she with hir beek had hurt hir-selve.
Now can nat Canacee but herbes delve
Out of the grounde, and make salves newe
Of herbes precious, and fyne of hewe,
To helen with this hauk; fro day to night
She dooth hir busynesse and al hir might.
And by hir beddes heed she made a mewe,
And covered it with veluëttes blewe,
In signe of trouthe that is in wommen sene.
And al with-oute, the mewe is peynted grene,
In which were peynted alle thise false foules,
As beth thise tidifs, tercelets, and oules,
Right for despyt were peynted hem bisyde,
And pyes, on hem for to crye and chyde.
Thus lete I Canacee hir hauk keping;
I wol na-more as now speke of hir ring,
Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
How that this faucon gat hir love ageyn
Repentant, as the storie telleth us,
By mediacioun of Cambalus,
The kinges sone, of whiche I yow tolde.
But hennes-forth I wol my proces holde
To speke of aventures and of batailles,
That never yet was herd so grete mervailles.
First wol I telle yow of Cambinskan,
That in his tyme many a citee wan;
And after wol I speke of Algarsyf,
How that he wan Theodora to his wyf,
For whom ful ofte in greet peril he was,
Ne hadde he ben holpen by the stede of bras;
And after wol I speke of Cambalo,
That faught in listes with the bretheren two

For Canacee, er that he mighte hir winne.
And ther I lefte I wol ageyn biginne.

Explicit secunda pars. Incipit pars tercia.

Appollo whirleth up his char so hye,
Til that the god Mercurius hous the slye—

* * * * *

Here folwen the wordes of the Frankelin to the Squier, and the wordes of the Host to the Frankelin.

'In feith, Squier, thou hast thee wel y-quit,
And gentilly I preise wel thy wit,'
Quod the Frankeleyn, 'considering thy youthe,
So feelingly thou spekest, sir, I allow the!
As to my doom, there is non that is here
Of eloquence that shal be thy pere,
If that thou live; god yeve thee good chaunce,
And in vertu sende thee continuaunce!
For of thy speche I have greet deyntee.
I have a sone, and, by the Trinitee,
I hadde lever than twenty pound worth lond,
Though it right now were fallen in myn hond,
He were a man of swich discrecioun
As that ye been! fy on possessioun
But-if a man be vertuous with-al.
I have my sone snibbed, and yet shal,
For he to vertu listeth nat entende;
But for to pleye at dees, and to despende,
And lese al that he hath, is his usage.
And he hath lever talken with a page
Than to comune with any gentil wight
Ther he mighte lerne gentillesse aright.'
'Straw for your gentillesse,' quod our host;
'What, frankeleyn? pardee, sir, wel thou wost
That eche of yow mot tellen atte leste
A tale or two, or breken his biheste.'
'That knowe I wel, sir,' quod the frankeleyn;
'I prey yow, haveth me nat in desdeyn
Though to this man I speke a word or two.'
'Telle on thy tale with-outen wordes mo.'
'Gladly, sir host,' quod he, 'I wol obeye
Un-to your wil; now herkneth what I seye.
I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse
As fer as that my wittes wol suffyse;
I prey to god that it may plesen yow,
Than woot I wel that it is good y-now.'

[*The* Frankleyn's Prologue *follows immediately.*]

THE FRANKLIN'S PROLOGUE.

The Prologe of the Frankeleyns Tale.

THISE olde gentil Britons in hir dayes
Of diverse aventures maden layes,
Rymeyed in hir firste Briton tonge;
Which layes with hir instruments they songe,
Or elles redden hem for hir plesaunce;
And oon of hem have I in remembraunce,
Which I shal seyn with good wil as I can.
But, sires, by-cause I am a burel man,
At my biginning first I yow biseche
Have me excused of my rude speche;
I lerned never rethoryk certeyn;
Thing that I speke, it moot be bare and pleyn.
I sleep never on the mount of Pernaso,
Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Cithero.
Colours ne knowe I none, with-outen drede,
But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
Or elles swiche as men dye or peynte.
Colours of rethoryk ben me to queynte;
My spirit feleth noght of swich matere.
But if yow list, my tale shul ye here.

THE FRANKELEYNS TALE.

Here biginneth the Frankeleyns Tale.

In Armorik, that called is Britayne,
Ther was a knight that loved and dide his payne
To serve a lady in his beste wyse;
And many a labour, many a greet empryse
He for his lady wroghte, er she were wonne.
For she was oon, the faireste under sonne,
And eek therto come of so heigh kinrede,
That wel unnethes dorste this knight, for drede,
Telle hir his wo, his peyne, and his distresse.
But atte laste, she, for his worthinesse,
And namely for his meke obeysaunce,
Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce,
That prively she fil of his accord
To take him for hir housbonde and hir lord,
Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir wyves;
And for to lede the more in blisse hir lyves,
Of his free wil he swoor hir as a knight,
That never in al his lyf he, day ne night,
Ne sholde up-on him take no maistrye
Agayn hir wil, ne kythe hir Ialousye,
But hir obeye, and folwe hir wil in al
As any lovere to his lady shal;
Save that the name of soveraynetee,
That wolde he have for shame of his degree.
She thanked him, and with ful greet humblesse
She seyde, 'sire, sith of your gentillesse
Ye profre me to have so large a reyne,
Ne wolde never god bitwixe us tweyne,
As in my gilt, were outher werre or stryf.
Sir, I wol be your humble trewe wyf,
Have heer my trouthe, til that myn herte breste.'
Thus been they bothe in quiete and in reste.
For o thing, sires, saufly dar I seye,
That frendes everich other moot obeye,
If they wol longe holden companye.
Love wol nat ben constreyned by maistrye;
Whan maistrie comth, the god of love anon
Beteth hise winges, and farewel! he is gon!
Love is a thing as any spirit free;
Wommen of kinde desiren libertee,
And nat to ben constreyned as a thral;
And so don men, if I soth seyen shal.
Loke who that is most pacient in love,
He is at his avantage al above.
Pacience is an heigh vertu certeyn;
For it venquisseth, as thise clerkes seyn,
Thinges that rigour sholde never ateyne.
For every word men may nat chyde or pleyne.
Lerneth to suffre, or elles, so moot I goon,
Ye shul it lerne, wher-so ye wole or noon.
For in this world, certein, ther no wight is,
That he ne dooth or seith som-tyme amis.
Ire, siknesse, or constellacioun,
Wyn, wo, or chaunginge of complexioun
Causeth ful ofte to doon amis or speken.
On every wrong a man may nat be wreken;
After the tyme, moste be temperaunce
To every wight that can on governaunce.
And therfore hath this wyse worthy knight,
To live in ese, suffrance hir bihight,
And she to him ful wisly gan to swere
That never sholde ther be defaute in here.
Heer may men seen an humble wys accord;
Thus hath she take hir servant and hir lord,
Servant in love, and lord in mariage;
Than was he bothe in lordship and servage;

Servage? nay, but in lordshipe above,
Sith he hath bothe his lady and his love;
His lady, certes, and his wyf also,
The which that lawe of love acordeth to.
And whan he was in this prosperitee,
Hoom with his wyf he gooth to his contree,
Nat fer fro Penmark, ther his dwelling was,
Wher-as he liveth in blisse and in solas.
Who coude telle, but he had wedded be,
The Ioye, the ese, and the prosperitee
That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf?
A yeer and more lasted this blisful lyf,
Til that the knight of which I speke of thus,
That of Kayrrud was cleped Arveragus,
Shoop him to goon, and dwelle a yeer or tweyne
In Engelond, that cleped was eek Britteyne,
To seke in armes worship and honour;
For al his lust he sette in swich labour;
And dwelled ther two yeer, the book seith thus.
Now wol I stinte of this Arveragus,
And speken I wole of Dorigene his wyf,
That loveth hir housbonde as hir hertes lyf.
For his absence wepeth she and syketh,
As doon thise noble wyves whan hem lyketh.
She moorneth, waketh, wayleth, fasteth, pleyneth;
Desyr of his presence hir so distreyneth,
That al this wyde world she sette at noght.
Hir frendes, whiche that knewe hir hevy thoght,
Conforten hir in al that ever they may;
They prechen hir, they telle hir night and day,
That causelees she sleeth hir-self, allas!
And every confort possible in this cas
They doon to hir with al hir bisinesse,
Al for to make hir leve hir hevinesse.
By proces, as ye knowen everichoon,
Men may so longe graven in a stoon,
Til som figure ther-inne emprented be.
So longe han they conforted hir, til she
Receyved hath, by hope and by resoun,
The emprenting of hir consolacioun,
Thurgh which hir grete sorwe gan aswage;
She may nat alwey duren in swich rage.
And eek Arveragus, in al this care,
Hath sent hir lettres hoom of his welfare,
And that he wol come hastily agayn;
Or elles hadde this sorwe hir herte slayn.
Hir freendes sawe hir sorwe gan to slake,
And preyede hir on knees, for goddes sake,
To come and romen hir in companye,
Awey to dryve hir derke fantasye.
And finally, she graunted that requeste;
For wel she saugh that it was for the beste.
Now stood hir castel faste by the see,
And often with hir freendes walketh she
Hir to disporte up-on the bank an heigh,
Wher-as she many a ship and barge seigh
Seilinge hir cours, wher-as hem liste go;
But thanne was that a parcel of hir wo.
For to hir-self ful ofte 'allas!' seith she,
'Is ther no ship, of so manye as I see,
Wol bringen hom my lord? than were myn herte
Al warisshed of his bittre peynes smerte.'
Another tyme ther wolde she sitte and thinke,
And caste hir eyen dounward fro the brinke.
But whan she saugh the grisly rokkes blake,
For verray fere so wolde hir herte quake,
That on hir feet she mighte hir noght sustene.
Than wolde she sitte adoun upon the grene,
And pitously in-to the see biholde,
And seyn right thus, with sorweful sykes colde:
'Eterne god, that thurgh thy purveyaunce
Ledest the world by certein governaunce,
In ydel, as men seyn, ye no-thing make;
But, lord, thise grisly feendly rokkes blake,
That semen rather a foul confusioun
Of werk than any fair creacioun
Of swich a parfit wys god and a stable,

Why han ye wroght this werk unresonable?
For by this werk, south, north, ne west, ne eest,
Ther nis y-fostred man, ne brid, ne beest;
It dooth no good, to my wit, but anoyeth.
See ye nat, lord, how mankinde it destroyeth?
An hundred thousand bodies of mankinde
Han rokkes slayn, al be they nat in minde,
Which mankinde is so fair part of thy werk
That thou it madest lyk to thyn owene merk.
Than semed it ye hadde a greet chiertee
Toward mankinde; but how than may it be
That ye swiche menes make it to destroyen,
Whiche menes do no good, but ever anoyen?
I woot wel clerkes wol seyn, as hem leste,
By arguments, that al is for the beste,
Tho I ne can the causes nat y-knowe.
But thilke god, that made wind to blowe,
As kepe my lord! this my conclusioun;
To clerkes lete I al disputisoun.
But wolde god that alle thise rokkes blake
Were sonken in-to helle for his sake!
Thise rokkes sleen myn herte for the fere.'
Thus wolde she seyn, with many a pitous tere.
Hir freendes sawe that it was no disport
To romen by the see, but disconfort;
And shopen for to pleyen somwher elles.
They leden hir by riveres and by welles,
And eek in othere places delitables;
They dauncen, and they pleyen at ches and tables.
So on a day, right in the morwe-tyde,
Un-to a gardin that was ther bisyde,
In which that they had maad hir ordinaunce
Of vitaille and of other purveyaunce,
They goon and pleye hem al the longe day.
And this was on the sixte morwe of May,
Which May had peynted with his softe shoures
This gardin ful of leves and of floures;
And craft of mannes hand so curiously
Arrayed hadde this gardin, trewely,
That never was ther gardin of swich prys,
But-if it were the verray paradys.
The odour of floures and the fresshe sighte
Wolde han maad any herte for to lighte
That ever was born, but-if to gret siknesse,
Or to gret sorwe helde it in distresse;
So ful it was of beautee with plesaunce.
At-after diner gonne they to daunce,
And singe also, save Dorigen allone,
Which made alwey hir compleint and hir mone;
For she ne saugh him on the daunce go,
That was hir housbonde and hir love also.
But nathelees she moste a tyme abyde,
And with good hope lete hir sorwe slyde.
Up-on this daunce, amonges othere men,
Daunced a squyer biforen Dorigen,
That fressher was and Iolyer of array,
As to my doom, than is the monthe of May.
He singeth, daunceth, passinge any man
That is, or was, sith that the world bigan.
Ther-with he was, if men sholde him discryve,
Oon of the beste faringe man on-lyve;
Yong, strong, right vertuous, and riche and wys,
And wel biloved, and holden in gret prys.
And shortly, if the sothe I tellen shal,
Unwiting of this Dorigen at al,
This lusty squyer, servant to Venus,
Which that y-cleped was Aurelius,
Had loved hir best of any creature
Two yeer and more, as was his aventure,
But never dorste he telle hir his grevaunce;
With-outen coppe he drank al his penaunce.

He was despeyred, no-thing dorste he seye,
Save in his songes somwhat wolde he wreye
His wo, as in a general compleyning;
He seyde he lovede, and was biloved no-thing.
Of swich matere made he manye layes,
Songes, compleintes, roundels, virelayes,
How that he dorste nat his sorwe telle,
But languissheth, as a furie dooth in helle;
And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide Ekko
For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir wo.
In other manere than ye here me seye,
Ne dorste he nat to hir his wo biwreye;
Save that, paraventure, som-tyme at daunces,
Ther yonge folk kepen hir observaunces,
It may wel be he loked on hir face
In swich a wyse, as man that asketh grace;
But no-thing wiste she of his entente.
Nathelees, it happed, er they thennes wente,
By-cause that he was hir neighebour,
And was a man of worship and honour,
And hadde y-knowen him of tyme yore,
They fille in speche; and forth more and more
Un-to his purpos drough Aurelius,
And whan he saugh his tyme, he seyde thus:

'Madame,' quod he, 'by god that this world made,
So that I wiste it mighte your herte glade,
I wolde, that day that your Arveragus
Wente over the see, that I, Aurelius,
Had went ther never I sholde have come agayn;
For wel I woot my service is in vayn.
My guerdon is but bresting of myn herte;
Madame, reweth upon my peynes smerte;
For with a word ye may me sleen or save,
Heer at your feet god wolde that I were grave!
I ne have as now no leyser more to seye;
Have mercy, swete, or ye wol do me deye!'

She gan to loke up-on Aurelius:

'Is this your wil,' quod she, 'and sey ye thus?
Never erst,' quod she, 'ne wiste I what ye mente.
But now, Aurelie, I knowe your entente,
By thilke god that yaf me soule and lyf,
Ne shal I never been untrewe wyf
In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit:
I wol ben his to whom that I am knit;
Tak this for fynal answer as of me.'
But after that in pley thus seyde she:

'Aurelie,' quod she, 'by heighe god above,
Yet wolde I graunte yow to been your love,
Sin I yow see so pitously complayne;
Loke what day that, endelong Britayne,
Ye remoeve alle the rokkes, stoon by stoon,
That they ne lette ship ne boot to goon—
I seye, whan ye han maad the coost so clene
Of rokkes, that ther nis no stoon y-sene,
Than wol I love yow best of any man;
Have heer my trouthe in al that ever I can.'

'Is ther non other grace in yow,' quod he.

'No, by that lord,' quod she, 'that maked me!
For wel I woot that it shal never bityde.
Lat swiche folies out of your herte slyde.
What deyntee sholde a man han in his lyf
For to go love another mannes wyf,
That hath hir body whan so that him lyketh?'

Aurelius ful ofte sore syketh;
Wo was Aurelie, whan that he this herde,
And with a sorweful herte he thus answerde:

'Madame,' quod he, 'this were an inpossible!
Than moot I dye of sodein deth horrible.'
And with that word he turned him anoon.
Tho come hir othere freendes many oon,
And in the aleyes romeden up and doun,
And no-thing wiste of this conclusioun,
But sodeinly bigonne revel newe

Til that the brighte sonne loste his hewe;
For thorisonte hath reft the sonne his light;
This is as muche to seye as it was night.
And hoom they goon in Ioye and in solas,
Save only wrecche Aurelius, allas! 1020
He to his hous is goon with sorweful herte;
He seeth he may nat fro his deeth asterte.
Him semed that he felte his herte colde;
Up to the hevene his handes he gan holde,
And on his knowes bare he sette him doun, 1025
And in his raving seyde his orisoun.
For verray wo out of his wit he breyde.
He niste what he spak, but thus he seyde;
With pitous herte his pleynt hath he bigonne
Un-to the goddes, and first un-to the sonne: 1030
He seyde, 'Appollo, god and governour
Of every plaunte, herbe, tree and flour,
That yevest, after thy declinacioun,
To ech of hem his tyme and his sesoun,
As thyn herberwe chaungeth lowe or hye, 1035
Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable yë
On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but lorn.
Lo, lord! my lady hath my deeth y-sworn
With-oute gilt, but thy benignitee
Upon my dedly herte have som pitee!
For wel I woot, lord Phebus, if yow lest, 1041
Ye may me helpen, save my lady, best.
Now voucheth sauf that I may yow devyse
How that I may been holpe and in what wyse.
Your blisful suster, Lucina the shene,
That of the see is chief goddesse and quene, 1046
Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,
Yet emperesse aboven him is she:
Ye knowen wel, lord, that right as hir desyr
Is to be quiked and lightned of your fyr, 1050
For which she folweth yow ful busily,
Right so the see desyreth naturelly
To folwen hir, as she that is goddesse
Bothe in the see and riveres more and lesse.
Wherfore, lord Phebus, this is my requeste — 1055
Do this miracle, or do myn herte breste —
That now, next at this opposicioun,
Which in the signe shal be of the Leoun,
As preyeth hir so greet a flood to bringe,
That fyve fadme at the leeste it overspringe 1060
The hyeste rokke in Armorik Briteyne;
And lat this flood endure yeres tweyne;
Than certes to my lady may I seye:
"Holdeth your heste, the rokkes been aweye."
Lord Phebus, dooth this miracle for me; 1065
Preye hir she go no faster cours than ye;
I seye, preyeth your suster that she go
No faster cours than ye thise yeres two.
Than shal she been evene atte fulle alway,
And spring-flood laste bothe night and day. 1070
And, but she vouche-sauf in swiche manere
To graunte me my sovereyn lady dere.
Prey hir to sinken every rok adoun
In-to hir owene derke regioun
Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth inne, 1075
Or never-mo shal I my lady winne.
Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot seke;
Lord Phebus, see the teres on my cheke,
And of my peyne have som compassioun.'
And with that word in swowne he fil adoun, 1080
And longe tyme he lay forth in a traunce.
His brother, which that knew of his penaunce,
Up caughte him and to bedde he hath him broght.
Dispeyred in this torment and this thoght
Lete I this woful creature lye; 1085
Chese he for me, whether he wol live or dye.

Arveragus, with hele and greet honour,
As he that was of chivalrye the flour,
Is comen hoom, and othere worthy men.
O blisful artow now, thou Dorigen,
That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne armes,
The fresshe knight, the worthy man of armes,
That loveth thee, as his owene hertes lyf.
No-thing list him to been imaginatyf
If any wight had spoke, whyl he was oute,
To hire of love; he hadde of it no doute.
He noght entendeth to no swich matere,
But daunceth, Iusteth, maketh hir good chere;
And thus in Ioye and blisse I lete hem dwelle,
And of the syke Aurelius wol I telle.
In langour and in torment furious
Two yeer and more lay wrecche Aurelius,
Er any foot he mighte on erthe goon;
Ne confort in this tyme hadde he noon,
Save of his brother, which that was a clerk:
He knew of al this wo and al this werk.
For to non other creature certeyn
Of this matere he dorste no word seyn.
Under his brest he bar it more secree
Than ever dide Pamphilus for Galathee.
His brest was hool, with-oute for to sene,
But in his herte ay was the arwe kene.
And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure
In surgerye is perilous the cure,
But men mighte touche the arwe, or come therby.
His brother weep and wayled prively,
Til atte laste him fil in remembraunce,
That whyl he was at Orliens in Fraunce,
As yonge clerkes, that been likerous
To reden artes that been curious,
Seken in every halke and every herne
Particuler sciences for to lerne,
He him remembred that, upon a day,
At Orliens in studie a book he say
Of magik naturel, which his felawe,
That was that tyme a bacheler of lawe,
Al were he ther to lerne another craft,
Had prively upon his desk y-laft;
Which book spak muchel of the operacions,
Touchinge the eighte and twenty mansions
That longen to the mone, and swich folye,
As in our dayes is nat worth a flye;
For holy chirches feith in our bileve
Ne suffreth noon illusion us to greve.
And whan this book was in his remembraunce,
Anon for Ioye his herte gan to daunce,
And to him-self he seyde prively:
'My brother shal be warisshed hastily;
For I am siker that ther be sciences,
By whiche men make diverse apparences
Swiche as thise subtile tregetoures pleye.
For ofte at festes have I wel herd seye,
That tregetours, with-inne an halle large,
Have maad come in a water and a barge,
And in the halle rowen up and doun.
Somtyme hath semed come a grim leoun;
And somtyme floures springe as in a mede;
Somtyme a vyne, and grapes whyte and rede;
Somtyme a castel, al of lym and stoon;
And whan hem lyked, voyded it anoon.
Thus semed it to every mannes sighte.
Now than conclude I thus, that if I mighte
At Orliens som old felawe y-finde,
That hadde this mones mansions in minde,
Or other magik naturel above,
He sholde wel make my brother han his love.
For with an apparence a clerk may make
To mannes sighte, that alle the rokkes blake
Of Britaigne weren y-voyded everichon,
And shippes by the brinke comen and gon,
And in swich forme endure a day or two;
Than were my brother warisshed of his wo.
Than moste she nedes holden hir biheste,
Or elles he shal shame hir atte leste.'
What sholde I make a lenger tale of this?
Un-to his brotheres bed he comen is,
And swich confort he yaf him for to gon

To Orliens, that he up stirte anon,
And on his wey forthward thanne is he fare,
In hope for to been lissed of his care.
Whan they were come almost to that citee,
But-if it were a two furlong or three,
A yong clerk rominge by him-self they mette,
Which that in Latin thriftily hem grette,
And after that he seyde a wonder thing:
'I knowe,' quod he, 'the cause of your coming';
And er they ferther any fote wente,
He tolde hem al that was in hir entente.
This Briton clerk him asked of felawes
The whiche that he had knowe in olde dawes;
And he answerde him that they dede were,
For which he weep ful ofte many a tere.
Doun of his hors Aurelius lighte anon,
And forth with this magicien is he gon
Hoom to his hous, and made hem wel at ese.
Hem lakked no vitaille that mighte hem plese;
So wel arrayed hous as ther was oon
Aurelius in his lyf saugh never noon.
He shewed him, er he wente to sopeer,
Forestes, parkes ful of wilde deer;
Ther saugh he hertes with hir hornes hye,
The gretteste that ever were seyn with yë.
He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with houndes,
And somme with arwes blede of bittre woundes.
He saugh, whan voided were thise wilde deer,
Thise fauconers upon a fair river,
That with hir haukes han the heron slayn.
Tho saugh he knightes Iusting in a playn;
And after this, he dide him swich plesaunce,
That he him shewed his lady on a daunce
On which him-self he daunced, as him thoughte.
And whan this maister, that this magik wroughte,
Saugh it was tyme, he clapte his handes two,
And farewel! al our revel was ago.
And yet remoeved they never out of the hous,
Whyl they saugh al this sighte merveillous,
But in his studie, ther-as his bookes be,
They seten stille, and no wight but they three.
To him this maister called his squyer,
And seyde him thus: 'is redy our soper?
Almost an houre it is, I undertake,
Sith I yow bad our soper for to make,
Whan that thise worthy men wenten with me
In-to my studie, ther-as my bookes be.'
'Sire,' quod this squyer, 'whan it lyketh yow,
It is al redy, though ye wol right now.'
'Go we than soupe,' quod he, 'as for the beste;
This amorous folk som-tyme mote han reste.'
At-after soper fille they in tretee,
What somme sholde this maistres guerdon be,
To remoeven alle the rokkes of Britayne,
And eek from Gerounde to the mouth of Sayne.
He made it straunge, and swoor, so god him save,
Lasse than a thousand pound he wolde nat have,
Ne gladly for that somme he wolde nat goon.
Aurelius, with blisful herte anoon,
Answerde thus, 'fy on a thousand pound!
This wyde world, which that men seye is round,
I wolde it yeve, if I were lord of it.
This bargayn is ful drive, for we ben knit.
Ye shal be payed trewely, by my trouthe!
But loketh now, for no necligence or slouthe,
Ye tarie us heer no lenger than to-morwe.'
'Nay,' quod this clerk, 'have heer my feith to borwe.'

To bedde is goon Aurelius whan him leste,
And wel ny al that night he hadde his reste;
What for his labour and his hope of blisse,
His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse.
Upon the morwe, whan that it was day,
To Britaigne toke they the righte way,
Aurelius, and this magicien bisyde,
And been descended ther they wolde abyde;
And this was, as the bokes me remembre,
The colde frosty seson of Decembre.
Phebus wex old, and hewed lyk latoun,
That in his hote declinacioun
Shoon as the burned gold with stremes brighte;
But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,
Wher-as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.
The bittre frostes, with the sleet and reyn,
Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd.
Janus sit by the fyr, with double berd,
And drinketh of his bugle-horn the wyn.
Biforn him stant braun of the tusked swyn,
And "Nowel" cryeth every lusty man.
Aurelius, in al that ever he can,
Doth to his maister chere and reverence,
And preyeth him to doon his diligence
To bringen him out of his peynes smerte,
Or with a sword that he wolde slitte his herte.
This subtil clerk swich routhe had of this man,
That night and day he spedde him that he can,
To wayte a tyme of his conclusioun;
This is to seye, to make illusioun,
By swich an apparence or jogelrye,
I ne can no termes of astrologye,
That she and every wight sholde wene and seye,
That of Britaigne the rokkes were aweye,
Or elles they were sonken under grounde.
So atte laste he hath his tyme y-founde
To maken his lapes and his wrecchednesse
Of swich a superstitious cursednesse.
His tables Toletanes forth he broght,
Ful wel corrected, ne ther lakked noght,
Neither his collect ne his expans yeres,
Ne his rotes ne his othere geres,
As been his centres and his argumentes,
And his proporcionels convenientes
For his equacions in every thing.
And, by his eighte spere in his wirking,
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above
That in the ninthe speere considered is;
Ful subtilly he calculed al this.
Whan he had founde his firste mansioun,
He knew the remenant by proporcioun;
And knew the arysing of his mone weel,
And in whos face, and terme, and everydeel;
And knew ful weel the mones mansioun
Acordaunt to his operacioun,
And knew also his othere observaunces
For swiche illusiouns and swiche meschaunces
As hethen folk used in thilke dayes;
For which no lenger maked he delayes,
But thurgh his magik, for a wyke or tweye,
It semed that alle the rokkes were aweye.
Aurelius, which that yet despeired is
Wher he shal han his love or fare amis,
Awaiteth night and day on this miracle;
And whan he knew that ther was noon obstacle,
That voided were thise rokkes everichon,
Doun to his maistres feet he fil anon,
And seyde, 'I woful wrecche, Aurelius,
Thanke yow, lord, and lady myn Venus,
That me han holpen fro my cares colde:'
And to the temple his wey forth hath he holde,
Wher-as he knew he sholde his lady see.
And whan he saugh his time, anon-right he,
With dredful herte and with ful humble chere,
Salewed hath his sovereyn lady dere:
'My righte lady,' quod this woful man,
'Whom I most drede and love as I best can,
And lothest were of al this world displese,
Nere it that I for yow have swich disese.

Neither his collect ne his expans yeres, 1276
Ne his rotes ne his othere geres, 1276
As been his centres and his argumentes,
And his proporcionels convenientes
For his equacions in every thing.
And, by his eighte spere in his wirking,
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove 1281
Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above
That in the ninthe speere considered is;
Ful subtilly he calculed al this.
Whan he had founde his firste mansioun, 1285
He knew the remenant by proporcioun;
And knew the arysing of his mone weel,
And in whos face, and terme, and everydeel;
And knew ful weel the mones mansioun
Acordaunt to his operacioun, 1290
And knew also his othere observaunces
For swiche illusiouns and swiche meschaunces
As hethen folk used in thilke dayes;
For which no lenger maked he delayes,
But thurgh his magik, for a wyke or tweye, 1295
It semed that alle the rokkes were aweye.
Aurelius, which that yet despeired is
Wher he shal han his love or fare amis,
Awaiteth night and day on this miracle;
And whan he knew that ther was noon obstacle, 1300
That voided were thise rokkes everichon,
Doun to his maistres feet he fil anon,
And seyde, 'I woful wrecche, Aurelius,
Thanke yow, lord, and lady myn Venus,
That me han holpen fro my cares colde:'
And to the temple his wey forth hath he holde, 1306
Wher-as he knew he sholde his lady see.
And whan he saugh his time, anon-right he,
With dredful herte and with ful humble chere,
Salewed hath his sovereyn lady dere:
'My righte lady,' quod this woful man, 1311
'Whom I most drede and love as I best can,
And lothest were of al this world displese,
Nere it that I for yow have swich disese.

That I moste dyen heer at your foot anon,
Noght wolde I telle how me is wo bigon;
But certes outher moste I dye or pleyne;
Ye slee me giltelees for verray peyne.
But of my deeth, thogh that ye have no routhe,
Avyseth yow, er that ye breke your trouthe.
Repenteth yow, for thilke god above,
Er ye me sleen by-cause that I yow love.
For, madame, wel ye woot what ye han hight;
Nat that I chalange any thing of right
Of yow my sovereyn lady, but your grace;
But in a gardin yond, at swich a place,
Ye woot right wel what ye bihighten me;
And in myn hand your trouthe plighten ye
To love me best, god woot, ye seyde so,
Al be that I unworthy be therto.
Madame, I speke it for the honour of yow,
More than to save myn hertes lyf right now;
I have do so as ye comanded me;
And if ye vouche-sauf, ye may go see.
Doth as yow list, have your biheste in minde,
For quik or deed, right ther ye shul me finde;
In yow lyth al, to do me live or deye; —
But wel I woot the rokkes been aweye!'
He taketh his leve, and she astonied stood,
In al hir face nas a drope of blood;
She wende never han come in swich a trappe:
'Alas!' quod she, 'that ever this sholde happe!
For wende I never, by possibilitee,
That swich a monstre or merveille mighte be!
It is agayns the proces of nature': And hoom she gooth a sorweful creature.
For verray fere unnethe may she go,
She wepeth, wailleth, al a day or two,
And swowneth, that it routhe was to see;
But why it was, to no wight tolde she;
For out of toune was goon Arveragus.
But to hir-self she spak, and seyde thus,
With face pale and with ful sorweful chere,
In hir compleynt, as ye shul after here:

'Allas,' quod she, 'on thee, Fortune, I pleyne,
That unwar wrapped hast me in thy cheyne;
For which, tescape, woot I no socour
Save only deeth or elles dishonour;
Oon of thise two bihoveth me to chese.
But nathelees, yet have I lever to lese
My lyf than of my body have a shame,
Or knowe my-selven fals, or lese my name,
And with my deth I may be quit, y-wis.
Hath ther nat many a noble wyf, er this,
And many a mayde y-slayn hir-self, allas!
Rather than with hir body doon trespas?
Yis, certes, lo, thise stories beren witnesse;
Whan thretty tyraunts, ful of cursednesse,
Had slayn Phidoun in Athenes, atte feste,
They comanded his doghtres for tareste,
And bringen hem biforn hem in despyt,
Al naked, to fulfille hir foul delyt,
And in hir fadres blood they made hem daunce
Upon the pavement, god yeve hem mischaunce!
For which thise woful maydens, ful of drede,
Rather than they wolde lese hir maydenhede,
They prively ben stirt in-to a welle,
And dreynte hem-selven, as the bokes telle.
They of Messene lete enquere and seke
Of Lacedomie fifty maydens eke,
On whiche they wolden doon hir lecherye;
But was there noon of al that companye
That she nas slayn, and with a good entente
Chees rather for to dye than assente
To been oppressed of hir maydenhede.
Why sholde I thanne to dye been in drede?
Lo, eek, the tiraunt Aristoclides
That loved a mayden, heet Stimphalides,
Whan that hir fader slayn was on a night,
Un-to Dianes temple goth she right,
And hente the image in hir handes two,
Fro which image wolde she never go.

No wight ne mighte hir handes of it arace,
Til she was slayn right in the selve place.
Now sith that maydens hadden swich despyt
To been defouled with mannes foul delyt,
Wel oghte a wyf rather hir-selven slee
Than be defouled, as it thinketh me.
What shal I seyn of Hasdrubales wyf,
That at Cartage birafte hir-self hir lyf?
For whan she saugh that Romayns wan the toun,
She took hir children alle, and skipte adoun
In-to the fyr, and chees rather to dye
Than any Romayn dide hir vileinye.
Hath nat Lucresse y-slayn hir-self, allas!
At Rome, whanne she oppressed was
Of Tarquin, for hir thoughte it was a shame
To liven whan she hadde lost hir name?
The sevene maydens of Milesie also
Han slayn hem-self, for verray drede and wo,
Rather than folk of Gaule hem sholde oppresse.
Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,
Coude I now telle as touchinge this matere.
Whan Habradate was slayn, his wyf so dere
Hirselven slow, and leet hir blood to glyde
In Habradates woundes depe and wyde,
And seyde, "my body, at the leeste way,
Ther shal no wight defoulen, if I may."
What sholde I mo ensamples heer-of sayn,
Sith that so manye han hem-selven slayn
Wel rather than they wolde defouled be?
I wol conclude, that it is bet for me
To sleen my-self, than been defouled thus.
I wol be trewe un-to Arveragus,
Or rather sleen my-self in som manere,
As dide Demociones doghter dere,
By-cause that she wolde nat defouled be.
O Cedasus! it is ful greet pitee,
To reden how thy doghtren deyde, allas!
That slowe hem-selven for swich maner cas.
As greet a pitee was it, or wel more,
The Theban mayden, that for Nichanore
Hir-selven slow, right for swich maner wo.
Another Theban mayden dide right so;
For oon of Macedoine hadde hir oppressed,
She with hir deeth hir maydenhede redressed.
What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf,
That for swich cas birafte hir-self hir lyf?
How trewe eek was to Alcebiades
His love, that rather for to dyen chees
Than for to suffre his body unburied be!
Lo which a wyf was Alceste,' quod she.
'What seith Omer of gode Penalopee?
Al Grece knoweth of hir chastitee.
Pardee, of Laodomya is writen thus,
That whan at Troye was slayn Protheselaus,
No lenger wolde she live after his day.
The same of noble Porcia telle I may;
With-oute Brutus coude she nat live,
To whom she hadde al hool hir herte yive.
The parfit wyfhod of Arthemesye
Honoured is thurgh al the Barbarye.
O Teuta, queen! thy wyfly chastitee
To alle wyves may a mirour be.
The same thing I seye of Bilia,
Of Rodogone, and eek Valeria.'
Thus pleyned Dorigene a day or tweye,
Purposinge ever that she wolde deye.
But nathelees, upon the thridde night,
Hom cam Arveragus, this worthy knight,
And asked hir, why that she weep so sore?
And she gan wepen ever lenger the more.
'Allas!' quod she, 'that ever was I born!
Thus have I seyd,' quod she, 'thus have I sworn'—
And told him al as ye han herd bifore;
It nedeth nat reherce it yow na-more.

This housbond with glad chere, in freendly wyse,
Answerde and seyde as I shal yow devyse:
'Is ther oght elles, Dorigen, but this?'
'Nay, nay,' quod she, 'god help me so, as wis;
This is to muche, and it were goddes wille.'
'Ye, wyf,' quod he, 'lat slepen that is stille;
It may be wel, paraventure, yet to-day.
Ye shul your trouthe holden, by my fay!
For god so wisly have mercy on me,
I hadde wel lever y-stiked for to be,
For verray love which that I to yow have,
But-if ye sholde your trouthe kepe and save.
Trouthe is the hyeste thing that man may kepe':—
But with that word he brast anon to wepe,
And seyde, 'I yow forbede, up peyne of deeth,
That never, whyl thee lasteth lyf ne breeth,
To no wight tel thou of this aventure.
As I may best, I wol my wo endure,
Ne make no contenance of hevinesse,
That folk of yow may demen harm or gesse.'
And forth he cleped a squyer and a mayde:
'Goth forth anon with Dorigen,' he sayde,
'And bringeth hir to swich a place anon.'
They take hir leve, and on hir wey they gon;
But they ne wiste why she thider wente.
He nolde no wight tellen his entente.
Paraventure an heep of yow, y-wis,
Wol holden him a lewed man in this,
That he wol putte his wyf in Iupartye;
Herkneth the tale, er ye up-on hir crye.
She may have bettre fortune than yow semeth;
And whan that ye han herd the tale, demeth.
This squyer, which that highte Aurelius,
On Dorigen that was so amorous,
Of aventure happed hir to mete
Amidde the toun, right in the quikkest strete,
As she was boun to goon the wey forthright
Toward the gardin ther-as she had hight.
And he was to the gardinward also;
For wel he spyed, whan she wolde go
Out of hir hous to any maner place.
But thus they mette, of aventure or grace;
And he saleweth hir with glad entente,
And asked of hir whiderward she wente?
And she answerde, half as she were mad,
'Un-to the gardin, as myn housbond bad,
My trouthe for to holde, allas! allas!'
Aurelius gan wondren on this cas,
And in his herte had greet compassioun
Of hir and of hir lamentacioun,
And of Arveragus, the worthy knight,
That bad hir holden al that she had hight,
So looth him was his wyf sholde breke hir trouthe;
And in his herte he caughte of this greet routhe,
Consideringe the beste on every syde,
That fro his lust yet were him lever abyde
Than doon so heigh a cherlish wrechednesse
Agayns franchyse and alle gentillesse;
For which in fewe wordes seyde he thus:
'Madame, seyth to your lord Arveragus,
That sith I see his grete gentillesse
To yow, and eek I see wel your distresse,
That him were lever han shame (and that were routhe)
Than ye to me sholde breke thus your trouthe,
I have wel lever ever to suffre wo
Than I departe the love bitwix yow two.
I yow relesse, madame, in-to your hond
Quit every surement and every bond,
That ye han maad to me as heer-biforn,
Sith thilke tyme which that ye were born.
My trouthe I plighte, I shal yow never repreve

Of no biheste, and here I take my leve,
As of the treweste and the beste wyf
That ever yet I knew in al my lyf.
But every wyf be-war of hir biheste,
On Dorigene remembreth atte leste.
Thus can a squyer doon a gentil dede,
As well as can a knight, with-outen drede.'
She thonketh him up-on hir knees al bare,
And hoom un-to hir housbond is she fare,
And tolde him al as ye han herd me sayd;
And be ye siker, he was so weel apayd,
That it were inpossible me to wryte;
What sholde I lenger of this cas endyte?
Arveragus and Dorigene his wyf
In sovereyn blisse leden forth hir lyf.
Never eft ne was ther angre hem bitwene;
He cherisseth hir as though she were a quene;
And she was to him trewe for evermore.
Of thise two folk ye gete of me na-more.
Aurelius, that his cost hath al forlorn,
Curseth the tyme that ever he was born:
'Allas,' quod he, 'allas! that I bihighte
Of pured gold a thousand pound of wighte
Un-to this philosophre! how shal I do?
I see na-more but that I am fordo.
Myn heritage moot I nedes selle,
And been a begger; heer may I nat dwelle,
And shamen al my kinrede in this place,
But I of him may gete bettre grace.
But nathelees, I wol of him assaye,
At certeyn dayes, yeer by yeer, to paye,
And thanke him of his grete curteisye;
My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol nat lye.'
With herte soor he gooth un-to his cofre,
And broghte gold un-to this philosophre,
The value of fyve hundred pound, I gesse,
And him bisecheth, of his gentillesse,
To graunte him dayes of the remenaunt,
And seyde, 'maister, I dar wel make avaunt,
I failled never of my trouthe as yit;
For sikerly my dette shal be quit
Towardes yow, how-ever that I fare
To goon a-begged in my kirtle bare.
But wolde ye vouche-sauf, up-on seurtee,
Two yeer or three for to respyten me,
Than were I wel; for elles moot I selle
Myn heritage; ther is na-more to telle.'
This philosophre sobrely answerde,
And seyde thus, whan he thise wordes herde:
'Have I nat holden covenant un-to thee?'
'Yes, certes, wel and trewely,' quod he.
'Hastow nat had thy lady as thee lyketh?'
'No, no,' quod he, and sorwefully he syketh.
'What was the cause? tel me if thou can.'
Aurelius his tale anon bigan,
And tolde him al, as ye han herd bifore;
It nedeth nat to yow reherce it more.
He seide, 'Arveragus, of gentillesse,
Had lever dye in sorwe and in distresse
Than that his wyf were of hir trouthe fals.'
The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde him als,
How looth hir was to been a wikked wyf,
And that she lever had lost that day hir lyf,
And that hir trouthe she swoor, thurgh innocence:
'She never erst herde speke of apparence;
That made me han of hir so greet pitee.
And right as frely as he sente hir me,
As frely sente I hir to him ageyn.
This al and som, ther is na-more to seyn.'
This philosophre answerde, 'leve brother,
Everich of yow dide gentilly til other.
Thou art a squyer, and he is a knight;
But god forbede, for his blisful might,
But-if a clerk coude doon a gentil dede
As wel as any of yow, it is no drede!
Sire, I relesse thee thy thousand pound,
As thou right now were cropen out of the ground,
Ne never er now ne haddest knowen me.
For sire, I wol nat take a peny of thee

For al my craft, ne noght for my travaille.
Thou hast y-payed wel for my vitaille;
It is y-nogh, and farewel, have good day: '
And took his hors, and forth he gooth his way.

Lordinges, this question wolde I aske now,
Which was the moste free, as thinketh yow?
Now telleth me, er that ye ferther wende.
I can na-more, my tale is at an ende.

Here is ended the Frankeleyns Tale.

GROUP G.

THE SECONDE NONNES TALE.

The Prologe of the Seconde Nonnes Tale.

The ministre and the norice un-to vyces,
Which that men clepe in English ydelnesse,
That porter of the gate is of delyces,
To eschue, and by hir contrarie hir oppresse,
That is to seyn, by leveful busynesse,
Wel oghten we to doon al our entente,
Lest that the feend thurgh ydelnesse us hente.

For he, that with his thousand cordes slye
Continuelly us waiteth to biclappe,
Whan he may man in ydelnesse espye,
He can so lightly cacche him in his trappe,
Til that a man be hent right by the lappe,
He nis nat war the feend hath him in honde;
Wel oughte us werche, and ydelnes withstonde.

And though men dradden never for to dye,
Yet seen men wel by reson doutelees,
That ydelnesse is roten slogardye,
Of which ther never comth no good encrees;
And seen, that slouthe hir holdeth in a lees
Only to slepe, and for to ete and drinke,
And to devouren al that othere swinke.

And for to putte us fro swiche ydelnesse,
That cause is of so greet confusioun,
I have heer doon my feithful busynesse,
After the legende, in translacioun
Right of thy glorious lyf and passioun,
Thou with thy gerland wroght of rose and lilie;
Thee mene I, mayde and martir, seint Cecilie!

Invocacio ad Mariam.

And thou that flour of virgines art alle,
Of whom that Bernard list so wel to wryte,
To thee at my biginning first I calle;
Thou comfort of us wrecches, do me endyte
Thy maydens deeth, that wan thurgh hir meryte
The eternal lyf, and of the feend victorie,
As man may after redem in hir storie.

Thou mayde and mooder, doghter of thy sone,
Thou welle of mercy, sinful soules cure,
In whom that god, for bountee, chees to wone,
Thou humble, and heigh over every creature,
Thou nobledest so ferforth our nature,
That no desdeyn the maker hadde of kinde,
His sone in blode and flesh to clothe and winde.

Withinne the cloistre blisful of thy sydes

Took mannes shap the eternal love and pees,
That of the tryne compas lord and gyde is,
Whom erthe and see and heven, out of relees,
Ay herien; and thou, virgin wemmelees,
Bar of thy body, and dweltest mayden pure,
The creatour of every creature.

Assembled is in thee magnificence
With mercy, goodnesse, and with swich pitee
That thou, that art the sonne of excellence,
Nat only helpest hem that preyen thee,
But ofte tyme, of thy benignitee,
Ful frely, er that men thyn help biseche,
Thou goost biforn, and art hir lyves leche.

Now help, thou meke and blisful fayre mayde,
Me, flemed wrecche, in this desert of galle;
Think on the womman Cananee, that sayde
That whelpes eten somme of the crommes alle
That from hir lordes table been y-falle;
And though that I, unworthy sone of Eve,
Be sinful, yet accepte my bileve.

And, for that feith is deed with-outen werkes,
So for to werken yif me wit and space,
That I be quit fro thennes that most derk is!
O thou, that art so fayr and ful of grace,
Be myn advocat in that heighe place
Ther-as withouten ende is songe 'Osanne,'
Thou Cristes mooder, doghter dere of Anne!

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte,
That troubled is by the contagioun
Of my body, and also by the wighte
Of erthly luste and fals affeccioun;
O haven of refut, o salvacioun
Of hem that ben in sorwe and in distresse,
Now help, for to my werk I wol me dresse.

Yet preye I yow that reden that I wryte,
Foryeve me, that I do no diligence
This ilke storie subtilly to endyte;
For both have I the wordes and sentence
Of him that at the seintes reverence
The storie wroot, and folwe hir legende,
And prey yow, that ye wol my werk amende.

Interpretacio nominis Cecilie, quam ponit frater Iacobus Ianuensis in Legenda Aurea.

First wolde I yow the name of seint Cecilie
Expoune, as men may in hir storie see,
It is to seye in English 'hevenes lilie,'
For pure chastnesse of virginitee;
Or, for she whytnesse hadde of honestee,
And grene of conscience, and of good fame
The sote savour, 'lilie' was hir name.

Or Cecile is to seye 'the wey to blinde,'
For she ensample was by good techinge;
Or elles Cecile, as I writen finde,
Is ioyned, by a maner conioininge
Of 'hevene' and 'Lia'; and heer, in figuringe,
The 'heven' is set for thoght of holinesse,
And 'Lia' for hir lasting bisinesse.

Cecile may eek be seyd in this manere,
'Wanting of blindnesse,' for hir grete light
Of sapience, and for hir thewes clere;
Or elles, lo! this maydens name bright
Of 'hevene' and 'leos' comth, for which by right
Men mighte hir wel 'the heven of peple' calle,
Ensample of gode and wyse werkes alle.

For 'leos' 'peple' in English is to seye,
And right as men may in the hevene see
The sonne and mone and sterres every weye,
Right so men gostly, in this mayden free,
Seyen of feith the magnanimitee,
And eek the cleernesse hool of sapience,
And sondry werkes, brighte of excellence.

And right so as thise philosophres wryte
That heven is swift and round and eek brenninge,
Right so was fayre Cecilie the whyte
Ful swift and busy ever in good werkinge,
And round and hool in good perseveringe,
And brenning ever in charitee ful brighte;
Now have I yow declared what she highte.

Explicit.

HERE BIGINNETH THE SECONDE NONNES TALE, OF THE LYF OF SEINTE CECILE.

THIS mayden bright Cecilie, as hir lyf seith,
Was comen of Romayns, and of noble kinde,
And from hir cradel up fostred in the feith
Of Crist, and bar his gospel in hir minde;
She never cessed, as I writen finde,
Of hir preyere, and god to love and drede,
Biseking him to kepe hir maydenhede.

And when this mayden sholde unto a man
Y-wedded be, that was ful yong of age,
Which that y-cleped was Valerian,
And day was comen of hir mariage,
She, ful devout and humble in hir corage,
Under hir robe of gold, that sat ful fayre,
Had next hir flesh y-clad hir in an heyre.

And whyl the organs maden melodye,
To god alone in herte thus sang she;
'O lord, my soule and eek my body gye
Unwemmed, lest that I confounded be:'
And, for his love that deyde upon a tree,
Every seconde or thridde day she faste,
Ay biddinge in hir orisons ful faste.

The night cam, and to bedde moste she gon
With hir housbonde, as ofte is the manere,
And prively to him she seyde anon,
'O swete and wel biloved spouse dere,
Ther is a conseil, and ye wolde it here,
Which that right fain I wolde unto yow seye,
So that ye swere ye shul me nat biwreye.'

Valerian gan faste unto hir swere,
That for no cas, ne thing that mighte be,
He sholde never-mo biwreyen here;
And thanne at erst to him thus seyde she,
'I have an angel which that loveth me,
That with greet love, wher-so I wake or slepe,
Is redy ay my body for to kepe.

And if that he may felen, out of drede,
That ye me touche or love in vileinye,
He right anon wol slee yow with the dede,
And in your yowthe thus ye shulden dye;
And if that ye in clene love me gye,
He wol yow loven as me, for your clennesse,
And shewen yow his loye and his brightnesse.'

Valerian, corrected as god wolde,
Answerde agayn, 'if I shal trusten thee,
Lat me that angel se, and him biholde;
And if that it a verray angel be
Than wol I doon as thou hast preyed me;
And if thou love another man, for sothe
Right with this swerd than wol I slee yow bothe.'

Cecile answerde anon right in this wyse,
'If that yow list, the angel shul ye see,
So that ye trowe on Crist and yow baptyse.
Goth forth to Via Apia,' quod she,
'That fro this toun ne stant but myles three,
And, to the povre folkes that ther dwelle,
Sey hem right thus, as that I shal yow telle.

Telle hem that I, Cecile, yow to hem sente,
To shewen yow the gode Urban the olde,
For secree nedes and for good entente.
And whan that ye seint Urban han biholde,

Telle him the wordes whiche I to yow tolde;
And whan that he hath purged yow fro sinne,
Thanne shul ye see that angel, er ye twinne.'

Valerian is to the place y-gon,
And right as him was taught by his lerninge,
He fond this holy olde Urban anon
Among the seintes buriels lotinge.
And he anon, with-outen taryinge,
Dide his message; and whan that he it tolde,
Urban for loye his hondes gan up holde.

The teres from his yën leet he falle—
'Almighty lord, o Iesu Crist,' quod he,
'Sower of chast conseil, herde of us alle,
The fruit of thilke seed of chastitee
That thou hast sowe in Cecile, tak to thee!
Lo, lyk a bisy bee, with-outen gyle,
Thee serveth ay thyn owene thral Cecile!

For thilke spouse, that she took but now
Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth here,
As meke as ever was any lamb, to yow!'
And with that worde, anon ther gan appere
An old man, clad in whyte clothes clere,
That hadde a book with lettre of golde in honde,
And gan biforn Valerian to stonde.

Valerian as deed fil doun for drede
Whan he him saugh, and he up hente him tho,
And on his book right thus he gan to rede—
'Oo Lord, oo feith, oo god with-outen mo,
Oo Cristendom, and fader of alle also,
Aboven alle and over al everywhere'—
Thise wordes al with gold y-writen were.

Whan this was rad, than seyde this olde man,
'Levestow this thing or no? sey ye or nay.'
'I leve al this thing,' quod Valerian,
'For sother thing than this, I dar wel say,
Under the hevene no wight thinke may.'
Tho vanisshed the olde man, he niste where,
And pope Urban him cristened right there.

Valerian goth hoom, and fint Cecilie
With-inne his chambre with an angel stonde;
This angel hadde of roses and of lilie
Corones two, the which he bar in honde;
And first to Cecile, as I understonde,
He yaf that oon, and after gan he take
That other to Valerian, hir make.

'With body clene and with unwemmed thoght
Kepeth ay wel thise corones,' quod he;
'Fro Paradys to yow have I hem broght,
Ne never-mo ne shal they roten be,
Ne lese her sote savour, trusteth me;
Ne never wight shal seen hem with his yë,
But he be chaast and hate vileinyë.

And thou, Valerian, for thou so sone
Assentedest to good conseil also,
Sey what thee list, and thou shalt han thy bone.'
'I have a brother,' quod Valerian tho,
'That in this world I love no man so.
I pray yow that my brother may han grace
To knowe the trouthe, as I do in this place.'

The angel seyde, 'god lyketh thy requeste,
And bothe, with the palm of martirdom,
Ye shullen come unto his blisful feste.'
And with that word Tiburce his brother com.
And whan that he the savour undernom
Which that the roses and the lilies caste
With-inne his herte he gan to wondre faste,

And seyde, 'I wondre, this tyme of the yeer,

Whennes that sote savour cometh so
Of rose and lilies that I smelle heer.
For though I hadde hem in myn hondes two,
The savour mighte in me no depper go.
The sote smel that in myn herte I finde
Hath chaunged me al in another kinde.'

Valerian seyde, 'two corones han we,
Snow-whyte and rose-reed, that shynen clere,
Whiche that thyn yën han no might to see;
And as thou smellest hem thurgh my preyere,
So shaltow seen hem, leve brother dere,
If it so be thou wolt, withouten slouthe,
Bileve aright and knowen verray trouthe.'

Tiburce answerde, 'seistow this to me
In soothnesse, or in dreem I herkne this?'
'In dremes,' quod Valerian, 'han we be
Unto this tyme, brother myn, y-wis.
But now at erst in trouthe our dwelling is.'
'How woostow this,' quod Tiburce, 'in what wyse?'
Quod Valerian, 'that shal I thee devyse.

The angel of god hath me the trouthe y-taught
Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wolt reneye
The ydoles and be clene, and elles naught.'—
And of the miracle of thise corones tweye
Seint Ambrose in his preface list to seye;
Solempnely this noble doctour dere
Commendeth it, and seith in this manere:

The palm of martirdom for to receyve,
Seinte Cecile, fulfild of goddes yifte,
The world and eek hir chambre gan she weyve;
Witnes Tyburces and Valerians shrifte,
To whiche god of his bountee wolde shifte
Corones two of floures wel smellinge,
And made his angel hem the corones bringe:

The mayde hath broght thise men to blisse above;
The world hath wist what it is worth, certeyn,
Devocioun of chastitee to love.—
Tho shewede him Cecile al open and pleyn
That alle ydoles nis but a thing in veyn;
For they been dombe, and therto they been deve,
And charged him his ydoles for to leve.

'Who so that troweth nat this, a beste he is,'
Quod tho Tiburce, 'if that I shal nat lye.'
And she gan kisse his brest, that herde this,
And was ful glad he coude trouthe espye.
'This day I take thee for myn allye,'
Seyde this blisful fayre mayde dere;
And after that she seyde as ye may here:

'Lo, right so as the love of Crist,' quod she,
'Made me thy brotheres wyf, right in that wyse
Anon for myn allye heer take I thee,
Sin that thou wolt thyn ydoles despyse.
Go with thy brother now, and thee baptyse,
And make thee clene; so that thou mowe biholde
The angels face of which thy brother tolde.'

Tiburce answerde and seyde, 'brother dere,
First tel me whider I shal, and to what man?'
'To whom?' quod he, 'com forth with right good chere,
I wol thee lede unto the pope Urban.'
'Til Urban? brother myn Valerian,' quod tho Tiburce, 'woltow me thider lede?
Me thinketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne menestow nat Urban,' quod he tho,
'That is so ofte dampned to be deed,
And woneth in halkes alwey to and fro,
And dar nat ones putte forth his heed?
Men sholde him brennen in a fyr so reed

If he were founde, or that men mighte
him spye;
And we also, to bere him companye —

And whyl we seken thilke divinitee
That is y-hid in hevene prively,
Algate y-brend in this world shul we
be!'
To whom Cecile answerde boldely,
'Men mighten dreden wel and skilfully
This lyf to lese, myn owene dere brother,
If this were livinge only and non other.

But ther is better lyf in other place,
That never shal be lost, ne drede thee
noght,
Which goddes sone us tolde thurgh his
grace;
That fadres sone hath alle thinges
wroght;
And al that wroght is with a skilful
thoght,
The goost, that fro the fader gan procede,
Hath sowled hem, withouten any drede.

By word and by miracle goddes sone,
Whan he was in this world, declared
here
That ther was other lyf ther men may
wone.'
To whom answerde Tiburce, 'o suster
dere,
Ne seydestow right now in this manere,
Ther nis but o god, lord in soothfast-
nesse;
And now of three how maystow bere
witnesse?'

'That shal I telle,' quod she, 'er I go.
Right as a man hath sapiences three,
Memorie, engyn, and intellect also,
So, in o being of divinitee,
Three persones may ther right wel be.'
Tho gan she him ful bisily to preche
Of Cristes come and of his peynes teche,

And many pointes of his passioun;
How goddes sone in this world was
withholde,
To doon mankinde pleyn remissioun,
That was y-bounde in sinne and cares
colde:
Al this thing she unto Tiburce tolde.

And after this Tiburce, in good entente,
With Valerian to pope Urban he wente,

That thanked god; and with glad herte
and light
He cristned him, and made him in that
place
Parfit in his lerninge, goddes knight.
And after this Tiburce gat swich grace,
That every day he saugh, in tyme and
space,
The angel of god; and every maner
bone
That he god axed, it was sped ful sone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to seyn
How many wondres Iesus for hem
wroghte;
But atte laste, to tellen short and pleyn,
The sergeants of the toun of Rome hem
soghte,
And hem biforn Almache the prefect
broghte,
Which hem apposed, and knew al hir
entente,
And to the image of Iupiter hem sente,

And seyde, 'who so wol nat sacrifyse,
Swap of his heed, this is my sentence
here.'
Anon thise martirs that I yow devyse,
Oon Maximus, that was an officere
Of the prefectes and his corniculere,
Hem hente; and whan he forth the
seintes ladde,
Him-self he weep, for pitee that he
hadde.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintes lore,
He gat him of the tormentoures leve,
And ladde hem to his hous withoute
more;
And with hir preching, er that it were eve,
They gonnen fro the tormentours to reve,
And fro Maxime, and fro his folk echone
The false feith, to trowe in god allone.

Cecilie cam, whan it was woxen night,
With preestes that hem cristned alle
y-fere;
And afterward, whan day was woxen
light,
Cecile hem seyde with a ful sobre chere,

'Now, Cristes owene knightes leve and dere,
Caste alle awey the werkes of derknesse,
And armeth yow in armure of brightnesse.

Ye han for sothe y-doon a greet bataille,
Your cours is doon, your feith han ye conserved,
Goth to the corone of lyf that may nat faille;
The rightful Iuge, which that ye han served,
Shall yeve it yow, as ye han it deserved.'
And whan this thing was seyd as I devyse,
Men ladde hem forth to doon the sacrifyse.

But whan they weren to the place broght,
To tellen shortly the conclusioun,
They nolde encense ne sacrifice right noght,
But on hir knees they setten hem adoun
With humble herte and sad devocioun,
And losten bothe hir hedes in the place.
Hir soules wenten to the king of grace.

This Maximus, that saugh this thing bityde,
With pitous teres tolde it anon-right,
That he hir soules saugh to heven glyde
With angels ful of cleernesse and of light,
And with his word converted many a wight;
For which Almachius dide him so tobete
With whippe of leed, til he his lyf gan lete.

Cecile him took and buried him anoon
By Tiburce and Valerian softely,
Withinne hir burying-place, under the stoon.
And after this Almachius hastily
Bad his ministres fecchen openly
Cecile, so that she mighte in his presence
Doon sacrifyce, and Iupiter encense.

But they, converted at hir wyse lore,
Wepten ful sore, and yaven ful credence
Unto hir word, and cryden more and more,
'Crist, goddes sone withouten difference,
Is verray god, this is al our sentence,
That hath so good a servant him to serve;
This with o voys we trowen, thogh we sterve!'

Almachius, that herde of this doinge,
Bad fecchen Cecile, that he might hir see,
And alderfirst, lo! this was his axinge,
'What maner womman artow?' tho quod he.
'I am a gentil womman born,' quod she.
'I axe thee,' quod he, 'thogh it thee greve,
Of thy religioun and of thy bileve.'

'Ye han bigonne your question folily,'
Quod she, 'that wolden two answeres conclude
In oo demande; ye axed lewedly.'
Almache answerde unto that similitude,
'Of whennes comth thyn answering so rude?'
'Of whennes?' quod she, whan that she was freyned,
'Of conscience and of good feith unfeyned.'

Almachius seyde, 'ne takestow non hede
Of my power?' and she answerde him this—
'Your might,' quod she, 'ful litel is to drede;
For every mortal mannes power nis
But lyk a bladdre, ful of wind, y-wis.
For with a nedles poynt, whan it is blowe,
May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe.'

'Ful wrongfully bigonne thou,' quod he,
'And yet in wrong is thy perseveraunce;
Wostow nat how our mighty princes free
Han thus comanded and maad ordinaunce,
That every cristen wight shal han penaunce
But-if that he his cristendom withseye,
And goon al quit, if he wol it reneye?'

'Your princes erren, as your nobley dooth,'
Quod tho Cecile, 'and with a wood sentence

Ye make us gilty, and it is nat sooth;
For ye, that knowen wel our innocence,
For as muche as we doon a reverence
To Crist, and for we bere a cristen name,
Ye putte on us a cryme, and eek a blame.

But we that knowen thilke name so
For vertuous, we may it nat withseye.'
Almache answerde, 'chees oon of thise two,
Do sacrifyce, or cristendom reneye,
That thou mowe now escapen by that weye.'
At which the holy blisful fayre mayde
Gan for to laughe, and to the Iuge seyde,

'O Iuge, confus in thy nycetee,
Woltow that I reneye innocence,
To make me a wikked wight?' quod she;
'Lo! he dissimuleth here in audience,
He stareth and woodeth in his advertence!'
To whom Almachius, 'unsely wrecche,
Ne woostow nat how far my might may strecche?

Han noght our mighty princes to me yeven,
Ye, bothe power and auctoritee
To maken folk to dyen or to liven?
Why spekestow so proudly than to me?'
'I speke noght but stedfastly,' quod she,
'Nat proudly, for I seye, as for my syde,
We haten deedly thilke vyce of pryde.

And if thou drede nat a sooth to here,
Than wol I shewe al openly, by right,
That thou hast maad a ful gret lesing here.
Thou seyst, thy princes han thee yeven might
Bothe for to sleen and for to quiken a wight;
Thou, that ne mayst but only lyf bireve,
Thou hast non other power ne no leve!

But thou mayst seyn, thy princes han thee maked
Ministre of deeth; for if thou speke of mo,
Thou lyest, for thy power is ful naked.'

'Do wey thy boldnes,' seyde Almachius tho,
'And sacrifyce to our goddes, er thou go;
I recche nat what wrong that thou me profre,
For I can suffre it as a philosophre;

But thilke wronges may I nat endure
That thou spekest of our goddes here,' quod he.
Cecile answerede, 'o nyce creature,
Thou seydest no word sin thou spak to me
That I ne knew therwith thy nycetee;
And that thou were, in every maner wyse,
A lewed officer and a veyn Iustyse.

Ther lakketh no-thing to thyn utter yën
That thou nart blind, for thing that we seen alle
That it is stoon, that men may wel espyen,
That ilke stoon a god thou wolt it calle.
I rede thee, lat thyn hand upon it falle,
And taste it wel, and stoon thou shalt it finde,
Sin that thou seest nat with thyn yën blinde.

It is a shame that the peple shal
So scorne thee, and laughe at thy folye;
For comunly men woot it wel overal,
That mighty god is in his hevenes hye,
And thise images, wel thou mayst espye,
To thee ne to hem-self mowe nought profyte,
For in effect they been nat worth a myte.'

Thise wordes and swiche othere seyde she,
And he weex wroth, and bad men sholde hir lede
Hom til hir hous, 'and in hir hous,' quod he,
'Brenne hir right in a bath of flambes rede.'
And as he bad, right so was doon in dede;
For in a bath they gonne hir faste shetten,
And night and day greet fyr they under betten.

The longe night and eek a day also,
For al the fyr and eek the bathes hete,
She sat al cold, and felede no wo,
It made hir nat a drope for to swete.
But in that bath hir lyf she moste lete;
For he, Almachius, with ful wikke entente
To sleen hir in the bath his sonde sente.

Three strokes in the nekke he smoot hir tho,
The tormentour, but for no maner chaunce
He mighte noght smyte al hir nekke a-two;
And for ther was that tyme an ordinaunce,
That no man sholde doon man swich penaunce
The ferthe strook to smyten, softe or sore,
This tormentour ne dorste do na-more.

But half-deed, with hir nekke y-corven there,
He lefte hir lye, and on his wey is went.
The Cristen folk, which that aboute hir were,
With shetes han the blood ful faire y-hent.
Thre dayes lived she in this torment,
And never cessed hem the feith to teche;
That she hadde fostred, hem she gan to preche;

And hem she yaf hir moebles and hir thing,
And to the pope Urban bitook hem tho,
And seyde, 'I axed this at hevene king,
To han respyt three dayes and na-mo,
To recomende to yow, er that I go,
Thise soules, lo! and that I mighte do werche
Here of myn hous perpetuelly a cherche.'

Seint Urban, with his deknes, prively
The body fette, and buried it by nighte
Among his othere seintes honestly.
Hir hous the chirche of seint Cecilie highte;
Seint Urban halwed it, as he wel mighte;
In which, into this day, in noble wyse,
Men doon to Crist and to his seint servyse.

Here is ended the Seconde Nonnes Tale.

THE CANON'S YEOMAN'S PROLOGUE.

The prologe of the Chanons Yemannes Tale.

WHAN ended was the lyf of seint Cecyle,
Er we had riden fully fyve myle,
At Boghton under Blee us gan atake
A man, that clothed was in clothes blake,
And undernethe he hadde a whyte surplys.
His hakeney, that was al pomely grys,
So swatte, that it wonder was to see;
It semed he had priked myles three.
The hors eek that his yeman rood upon
So swatte, that unnethe mighte it gon.
Aboute the peytrel stood the foom ful hye,
He was of fome al flekked as a pye.
A male tweyfold on his croper lay,
It semed that he caried lyte array.
Al light for somer rood this worthy man,
And in myn herte wondren I bigan
What that he was, til that I understood
How that his cloke was sowed to his hood;
For which, when I had longe avysed me,
I demed him som chanon for to be.
His hat heng at his bak doun by a laas,
For he had riden more than trot or paas;
He had ay priked lyk as he were wood.
A clote-leef he hadde under his hood
For swoot and for to kepe his heed from hete.
But it was Ioye for to seen him swete!
His forheed dropped as a stillatorie,
Were ful of plantain and of paritorie.

And whan that he was come, he gan to crye,
'God save,' quod he, 'this Ioly companye!
Faste have I priked,' quod he, 'for your sake,
By-cause that I wolde yow atake,
To ryden in this mery companye.'
His yeman eek was ful of curteisye,
And seyde, 'sires, now in the morwetyde
Out of your hostelrye I saugh you ryde,
And warned heer my lord and my soverayn,
Which that to ryden with yow is ful fayn,
For his desport; he loveth daliaunce.'
'Freend, for thy warning god yeve thee good chaunce,'
Than seyde our host, 'for certes, it wolde seme
Thy lord were wys, and so I may wel deme;
He is ful Iocund also, dar I leye,
Can he oght telle a mery tale or tweye,
With which he glade may this companye?'
'Who, sire? my lord? ye, ye, withouten lye,
He can of murthe, and eek of Iolitee
Nat but ynough; also sir, trusteth me,
And ye him knewe as wel as do I,
Ye wolde wondre how wel and craftily
He coude werke, and that in sondry wyse.
He hath take on him many a greet empryse,
Which were ful hard for any that is here
To bringe aboute, but they of him it lere.
As homely as he rit amonges yow,
If ye him knewe, it wolde be for your prow;
Ye wolde nat forgoon his aqueyntaunce
For mochel good, I dar leye in balaunce
Al that I have in my possessioun.
He is a man of heigh discrecioun,
I warne you wel, he is a passing man.'
'Wel,' quod our host, 'I pray thee, tel me than,
Is he a clerk, or noon? tel what he is.'
'Nay, he is gretter than a clerk, y-wis,'
Seyde this yeman, 'and in wordes fewe,
Host, of his craft som-what I wol yow shewe.

I seye, my lord can swich subtilitee —
(But al his craft ye may nat wite at me;
And som-what helpe I yet to his werking) —
That al this ground on which we been ryding,
Til that we come to Caunterbury toun,
He coude al clene turne it up-so-doun,
And pave it al of silver and of gold.'
And whan this yeman hadde thus y-told
Unto our host, he seyde, '*benedicite!*
This thing is wonder merveillous to me,
Sin that thy lord is of so heigh prudence,
By-cause of which men sholde him reverence,
That of his worship rekketh he so lyte;
His oversloppe nis nat worth a myte,
As in effect, to him, so mote I go!
It is al baudy and to-tore also.
Why is thy lord so sluttish, I thee preye,
And is of power better cloth to beye,
If that his dede accorde with thy speche?
Telle me that, and that I thee biseche.'
'Why?' quod this yeman, 'wherto axe ye me?
God help me so, for he shal never thee!
(But I wol nat avowe that I seye,
And therfor kepe it secree, I yow preye).
He is to wys, in feith, as I bileve;
That that is overdoon, it wol nat preve
Aright, as clerkes seyn, it is a vyce.
Wherfor in that I holde him lewed and nyce.
For whan a man hath over-greet a wit,
Ful oft him happeth to misusen it;
So dooth my lord, and that me greveth sore.
God it amende, I can sey yow na-more.'
'Ther-of no fors, good yeman,' quod our host;
'Sin of the conning of thy lord thou wost,
Tel how he dooth, I pray thee hertely,
Sin that he is so crafty and so sly.
Wher dwellen ye, if it to telle be?'
'In the suburbes of a toun,' quod he,
'Lurkinge in hernes and in lanes blinde,
Wher-as thise robbours and thise theves by kinde
Holden hir privee fereful residence,
As they that dar nat shewen hir presence;

So faren we, if I shal seye the sothe.'
'Now,' quod our host, 'yit lat me talke to the;
Why artow so discoloured of thy face?'
'Peter!' quod he, 'god yeve it harde grace,
I am so used in the fyr to blowe,
That it hath chaunged my colour, I trowe.
I am nat wont in no mirour to prye,
But swinke sore and lerne multiplye.
We blondren ever and pouren in the fyr,
And for al that we fayle of our desyr,
For ever we lakken our conclusioun.
To mochel folk we doon illusioun,
And borwe gold, be it a pound or two,
Or ten, or twelve, or many sommes mo,
And make hem wenen, at the leeste weye,
That of a pound we coude make tweye!
Yet is it fals, but ay we han good hope
It for to doon, and after it we grope.
But that science is so fer us biforn,
We mowen nat, al-though we hadde it sworn,
It overtake, it slit awey so faste;
It wol us maken beggers atte laste.'
Whyl this yeman was thus in his talking,
This chanoun drough him neer, and herde al thing
Which this yeman spak, for suspecioun
Of mennes speche ever hadde this chanoun.
For Catoun seith, that he that gilty is
Demeth al thing be spoke of him, y-wis.
That was the cause he gan so ny him drawe
To his yeman, to herknen al his sawe.
And thus he seyde un-to his yeman tho,
'Hold thou thy pees, and spek no wordes mo,
For if thou do, thou shalt it dere abye;
Thou sclaundrest me heer in this companye,
And eek discoverest that thou sholdest hyde.'
'Ye,' quod our host, 'telle on, what so bityde;
Of al his threting rekke nat a myte!'
'In feith,' quod he, 'namore I do but lyte.'
And whan this chanon saugh it wolde nat be,
But his yeman wolde telle his privitee,
He fledde awey for verray sorwe and shame.
'A!' quod the yeman, 'heer shal aryse game,
Al that I can anon now wol I telle.
Sin he is goon, the foule feend him quelle!
For never her-after wol I with him mete
For peny ne for pound, I yow bihete!
He that me broghte first unto that game,
Er that he dye, sorwe have he and shame!
For it is ernest to me, by my feith;
That fele I wel, what so any man seith.
And yet, for al my smert and al my grief,
For al my sorwe, labour, and meschief,
I coude never leve it in no wyse.
Now wolde god my wit mighte suffyse
To tellen al that longeth to that art!
But natheles yow wol I tellen part;
Sin that my lord is gon, I wol nat spare;
Swich thing as that I knowe, I wol declare. —

Here endeth the Prologe of the Chanouns Yemannes Tale.

THE CHANOUNS YEMANNES TALE.

HERE BIGINNETH THE CHANOUNS YEMAN HIS TALE.

[*Prima pars.*]

WITH this chanoun I dwelt have seven yeer,
And of his science am I never the neer.
Al that I hadde, I have y-lost ther-by;
And god wot, so hath many mo than I.
Ther I was wont to be right fresh and gay
Of clothing and of other good array,
Now may I were an hose upon myn heed;

And wher my colour was bothe fresh and reed,
Now is it wan and of a leden hewe;
Who-so it useth, sore shal he rewe.
And of my swink yet blered is myn yë,
Lo! which avantage is to multiplye! 731
That slyding science hath me maad so bare,
That I have no good, wher that ever I fare;
And yet I am endetted so ther-by
Of gold that I have borwed, trewely, 735
That whyl I live, I shal it quyte never.
Lat every man be war by me for ever!
What maner man that casteth him ther-to,
If he continue, I holde his thrift y-do.
So helpe me god, ther-by shal he nat winne, 740
But empte his purs, and make his wittes thinne.
And whan he, thurgh his madnes and folye,
Hath lost his owene good thurgh Iupartye,
Thanne he excyteth other folk ther-to,
To lese hir good as he him-self hath do.
For unto shrewes Ioye it is and ese 746
To have hir felawes in peyne and disese;
Thus was I ones lerned of a clerk.
Of that no charge, I wol speke of our werk.
Whan we been ther as we shul exercyse 750
Our elvish craft, we semen wonder wyse,
Our termes been so clergial and so queynte.
I blowe the fyr til that myn herte feynte.

What sholde I tellen ech proporcioun
Of thinges whiche that we werche upon,
As on five or sixe ounces, may wel be,
Of silver or som other quantite, 757
And bisie me to telle yow the names
Of orpiment, brent bones, yren squames,
That into poudre grounden been ful smal? 760
And in an erthen potte how put is al,
And salt y-put in, and also papeer,
Biforn thise poudres that I speke of heer,
And wel y-covered with a lampe of glas,
And mochel other thing which that ther was? 765
And of the pot and glasses enluting,
That of the eyre mighte passe out nothing?
And of the esy fyr and smart also,
Which that was maad, and of the care and wo
That we hadde in our matires sublyming,
And in amalgaming and calcening 771
Of quik-silver, y-clept Mercurie crude?
For alle our sleightes we can nat conclude.
Our orpiment and sublymed Mercurie,
Our grounden litarge eek on the porphurie, 775
Of ech of thise of ounces a certeyn
Nought helpeth us, our labour is in veyn.
Ne eek our spirites ascencioun,
Ne our materes that lyen al fixe adoun,
Mowe in our werking no-thing us avayle.
For lost is al our labour and travayle, 781
And al the cost, a twenty devel weye,
Is lost also, which we upon it leye.
Ther is also ful many another thing
That is unto our craft apertening; 785
Though I by ordre hem nat reherce can,
By-cause that I am a lewed man,
Yet wol I telle hem as they come to minde,
Though I ne can nat sette hem in hir kinde;
As bole armoniak, verdegrees, boras, 790
And sondry vessels maad of erthe and glas,
Our urinales and our descensories,
Violes, croslets, and sublymatories,
Cucurbites, and alembykes eek, 794
And othere swiche, dere y-nough a leek.
Nat nedeth it for to reherce hem alle,
Watres rubifying and boles galle,
Arsenik, sal armoniak, and brimstoon;
And herbes coude I telle eek many oon,
As egremoine, valerian, and lunarie, 800
And othere swiche, if that me liste tarie.
Our lampes brenning bothe night and day,
To bringe aboute our craft, if that we may.
Our fourneys eek of calcinacioun,
And of watres albificacioun, 805
Unslekked lym, chalk, and gleyre of an ey,

Poudres diverse, asshes, dong, pisse, and cley,
Cered pokets, sal peter, vitriole;
And divers fyres maad of wode and cole;
Sal tartre, alkaly, and sal preparat,
And combust materes and coagulat,
Cley maad with hors or mannes heer, and oile
Of tartre, alum, glas, berm, wort, and argoile,
Resalgar, and our materes enbibing;
And eek of our materes encorporing,
And of our silver citrinacioun,
Our cementing and fermentacioun,
Our ingottes, testes, and many mo.
I wol yow telle, as was me taught also,
The foure spirites and the bodies sevene,
By ordre, as ofte I herde my lord hem nevene.
The first spirit quik-silver called is,
The second orpiment, the thridde, y-wis,
Sal armoniak, and the ferthe brimstoon.
The bodies sevene eek, lo! hem heer anoon:
Sol gold is, and Luna silver we threpe,
Mars yren, Mercurie quik-silver we clepe,
Saturnus leed, and Iupiter is tin,
And Venus coper, by my fader kin!
This cursed craft who-so wol exercyse,
He shal no good han that him may suffyse;
For al the good he spendeth ther-aboute,
He lese shal, ther-of have I no doute.
Who-so that listeth outen his folye,
Lat him come forth, and lerne multiplye;
And every man that oght hath in his cofre,
Lat him appere, and wexe a philosofre.
Ascaunce that craft is so light to lere?
Nay, nay, god woot, al be he monk or frere,
Preest or chanoun, or any other wight,
Though he sitte at his book bothe day and night,
In lernyng of this elvish nyce lore,
Al is in veyn, and parde, mochel more!
To lerne a lewed man this subtiltee,
Fy! spek nat ther-of, for it wol nat be;
Al conne he letterure, or conne he noon,
As in effect, he shal finde it al oon.
For bothe two, by my savacioun,
Concluden, in multiplicacioun,
Y-lyke wel, whan they han al y-do;
This is to seyn, they faylen bothe two.

Yet forgat I to maken rehersaille
Of watres corosif and of limaille,
And of bodyes mollificacioun,
And also of his induracioun,
Oiles, ablucions, and metal fusible,
To tellen al wolde passen any bible
That o-wher is; wherfor, as for the beste,
Of alle thise names now wol I me reste.
For, as I trowe, I have yow told y-nowe
To reyse a feend, al loke he never so rowe.
A! nay! lat be; the philosophres stoon,
Elixir clept, we sechen faste echoon;
For hadde we him, than were we siker y-now.
But, unto god of heven I make avow,
For al our craft, whan we han al y-do,
And al our sleighte, he wol nat come us to.
He hath y-maad us spenden mochel good,
For sorwe of which almost we wexen wood,
But that good hope crepeth in our herte,
Supposinge ever, though we sore smerte,
To be releved by him afterward;
Swich supposing and hope is sharp and hard;
I warne yow wel, it is to seken ever;
That futur temps hath maad men to dissever,
In trust ther-of, from al that ever they hadde.
Yet of that art they can nat wexen sadde,
For unto hem it is a bitter swete;
So semeth it; for nadde they but a shete
Which that they mighte wrappe hem inne a-night,
And a bak to walken inne by day-light,
They wolde hem selle and spenden on this craft;
They can nat stinte til no-thing be laft.
And evermore, wher that ever they goon,
Men may hem knowe by smel of brimstoon;
For al the world, they stinken as a goot;
Her savour is so rammish and so hoot,
That, though a man from hem a myle be,
The savour wol infecte him, trusteth me;
Lo, thus by smelling and threedbare array,

If that men liste, this folk they knowe may.
And if a man wol aske hem prively,
Why they been clothed so unthriftily,
They right anon wol rownen in his ere,
And seyn, that if that they espyed were,
Men wolde hem slee, by-cause of hir science;
Lo, thus this folk bitrayen innocence!
Passe over this; I go my tale un-to.
Er than the pot be on the fyr y-do,
Of metals with a certein quantite,
My lord hem tempreth, and no man but he—
Now he is goon, I dar seyn boldely—
For, as men seyn, he can don craftily;
Algate I woot wel he hath swich a name,
And yet ful oft he renneth in a blame;
And wite ye how? ful ofte it happeth so,
The pot to-breketh, and farewel! al is go!
Thise metals been of so greet violence,
Our walles mowe nat make hem resistence,
But if they weren wroght of lym and stoon;
They percen so, and thurgh the wal they goon,
And somme of hem sinken in-to the ground—
Thus han we lost by tymes many a pound—
And somme are scatered al the floor aboute,
Somme lepe in-to the roof; with-outen doute,
Though that the feend noght in our sighte him shewe,
I trowe he with us be, that ilke shrewe!
In helle wher that he is lord and sire,
Nis ther more wo, ne more rancour ne ire.
Whan that our pot is broke, as I have sayd,
Every man chit, and halt him yvel apayd.
Som seyde, it was long on the fyr-making,
Som seyde, nay! it was on the blowing;
(Than was I fered, for that was myn office);
'Straw!' quod the thridde, 'ye been lewed and nyce,
It was nat tempred as it oghte be.'
'Nay!' quod the ferthe, 'stint, and herkne me;
By-cause our fyr ne was nat maad of beech,
That is the cause, and other noon, so theech!'
I can nat telle wher-on it was long,
But wel I wot greet stryf is us among.
'What!' quod my lord, 'ther is na-more to done,
Of thise perils I wol be war eft-sone;
I am right siker that the pot was crased.
Be as be may, be ye no-thing amased;
As usage is, lat swepe the floor as swythe,
Plukke up your hertes, and beth gladde and blythe.'
The mullok on an hepe y-sweped was,
And on the floor y-cast a canevas,
And al this mullok in a sive y-throwe,
And sifted, and y-piked many a throwe.
'Pardee,' quod oon, 'somwhat of our metal
Yet is ther heer, though that we han nat al.
Al-though this thing mishapped have as now,
Another tyme it may be wel y-now,
Us moste putte our good in aventure;
A marchant, parde! may nat ay endure,
Trusteth me wel, in his prosperitee;
Somtyme his good is drenched in the see,
And somtym comth it sauf un-to the londe.'
'Pees!' quod my lord, 'the next tyme I wol fonde
To bringe our craft al in another plyte;
And but I do, sirs, lat me han the wyte;
Ther was defaute in som-what, wel I woot.'
Another seyde, the fyr was over hoot:—
But, be it hoot or cold, I dar seye this,
That we concluden evermore amis.
We fayle of that which that we wolden have,
And in our madnesse evermore we rave.
And whan we been togidres everichoon,
Every man semeth a Salomon.

But al thing which that shyneth as the gold
Nis nat gold, as that I have herd it told;
Ne every appel that is fair at yë
Ne is nat good, what-so men clappe or crye.
Right so, lo! fareth it amonges us;
He that semeth the wysest, by Iesus!
Is most fool, whan it cometh to the preef;
And he that semeth trewest is a theef;
That shul ye knowe, er that I fro yow wende,
By that I of my tale have maad an ende.

Explicit prima pars. Et sequitur pars secunda.

Ther is a chanoun of religioun
Amonges us, wolde infecte al a toun
Though it as greet were as was Ninivee,
Rome, Alisaundre, Troye, and othere three.
His sleightes and his infinit falsnesse
Ther coude no man wryten, as I gesse,
Thogh that he mighte liven a thousand yeer.
In al this world of falshede nis his peer;
For in his termes so he wolde him winde,
And speke his wordes in so sly a kinde,
Whan he commune shal with any wight,
That he wol make him doten anon right,
But it a feend be, as him-selven is.
Ful many a man hath he bigyled er this,
And wol, if that he live may a whyle;
And yet men ryde and goon ful many a myle
Him for to seke and have his aqueyntaunce,
Noght knowinge of his false governaunce.
And if yow list to yeve me audience,
I wol it tellen heer in your presence.
But worshipful chanouns religious,
Ne demeth nat that I sclaundre your hous,
Al-though my tale of a chanoun be.
Of every ordre som shrewe is, parde,
And god forbede that al a companye
Sholde rewe a singuler mannes folye.
To sclaundre yow is no-thing myn ententе,
But to correcten that is mis I mente.
This tale was nat only told for yow,
But eek for othere mo; ye woot wel how
That, among Cristes apostelles twelve,
Ther nas no traytour but Iudas himselve.
Than why sholde al the remenant have blame
That giltlees were? by yow I seye the same.
Save only this, if ye wol herkne me,
If any Iudas in your covent be,
Remeveth him bitymes, I yow rede,
If shame or los may causen any drede.
And beth no-thing displesed, I yow preye,
But in this cas herkneth what I shal seye.

In London was a preest, an annueleer,
That therin dwelled hadde many a yeer,
Which was so plesaunt and so servisable
Unto the wyf, wher-as he was at table,
That she wolde suffre him no-thing for to paye
For bord ne clothing, wente he never so gaye;
And spending-silver hadde he right y-now.
Therof no fors; I wol procede as now,
And telle forth my tale of the chanoun,
That broghte this preest to confusioun.
This false chanoun cam up-on a day
Unto this preestes chambre, wher he lay,
Biseching him to lene him a certeyn
Of gold, and he wolde quyte it him ageyn.
'Lene me a mark,' quod he, 'but dayes three,
And at my day I wol it quyten thee.
And if so be that thou me finde fals,
Another day do hange me by the hals!'
This preest him took a mark, and that a swysthe,
And this chanoun him thanked ofte sythe,
And took his leve, and wente forth his weye,

And at the thridde day broghte his moneye,
And to the preest he took his gold agayn,
Wherof this preest was wonder glad and fayn.
'Certes,' quod he, 'no-thing anoyeth me
To lene a man a noble, or two or three,
Or what thing were in my possessioun,
Whan he so trewe is of condicioun,
That in no wyse he breke wol his day;
To swich a man I can never seye nay.'
'What!' quod this chanoun, 'sholde I be untrewe?
Nay, that were thing y-fallen al of-newe.
Trouthe is a thing that I wol ever kepe
Un-to that day in which that I shal crepe
In-to my grave, and elles god forbede;
Bileveth this as siker as is your crede.
God thanke I, and in good tyme be it sayd,
That ther was never man yet yvel apayd
For gold ne silver that he to me lente,
Ne never falshede in myn herte I mente.
And sir,' quod he, 'now of my privetee,
Sin ye so goodlich han been un-to me,
And kythed to me so greet gentillesse,
Somwhat to quyte with your kindenesse,
I wol yow shewe, and, if yow list to lere,
I wol yow teche pleynly the manere,
How I can werken in philosophye.
Taketh good heed, ye shul wel seen at yë,
That I wol doon a maistrie er I go.'
'Ye,' quod the preest, 'ye, sir, and wol ye so?
Marie! ther-of I pray yow hertely!'
'At your comandement, sir, trewely,'
Quod the chanoun, 'and elles god forbede!'
Lo, how this theef coude his servyse bede!
Ful sooth it is, that swich profred servy
Stinketh, as witnessen thise olde wyse;
And that ful sone I wol it verifye
In this chanoun, rote of al trecherye,
That ever-more delyt hath and gladnesse—
Swich feendly thoughtes in his herte impresse—
How Cristes peple he may to meschief bringe;
God kepe us from his fals dissimulinge!
Noght wiste this preest with whom that he delte,
Ne of his harm cominge he no-thing felte.
O sely preest! O sely innocent!
With coveityse anon thou shalt be blent!
O gracelees, ful blind is thy conceit,
No-thing ne artow war of the deceit
Which that this fox y-shapen hath to thee!
His wyly wrenches thou ne mayst nat flee
Wherfor, to go to the conclusioun
That refereth to thy confusioun,
Unhappy man! anon I wol me hye
To tellen thyn unwit and thy folye,
And eek the falsnesse of that other wrecche,
As ferforth as that my conning may strecche.
This chanoun was my lord, ye wolden wene?
Sir host, in feith, and by the hevenes quene,
It was another chanoun, and nat he,
That can an hundred fold more subtiltee!
He hath bitrayed folkes many tyme;
Of his falshede it dulleth me to ryme.
Ever whan that I speke of his falshede,
For shame of him my chekes wexen rede;
Algates, they biginnen for to glowe,
For reednesse have I noon, right wel I knowe,
In my visage; for fumes dyverse
Of metals, which ye han herd me reherce,
Consumed and wasted han my reednesse.
Now tak heed of this chanouns cursednesse!
'Sir,' quod he to the preest, 'lat your man gon
For quik-silver, that we it hadde anon;
And lat him bringen ounces two or three;
And whan he comth, as faste shul ye see
A wonder thing, which saugh never er this.'
'Sir,' quod the preest, 'it shal be doon, y-wis.'

He bad his servant fecchen him this thing,
And he al redy was at his bidding,
And wente him forth, and cam anon agayn
With this quik-silver, soothly for to sayn,
And took thise ounces three to the chanoun;
And he hem leyde fayre and wel adoun,
And bad the servant coles for to bringe,
That he anon mighte go to his werkinge.
The coles right anon weren y-fet,
And this chanoun took out a crosselet
Of his bosom, and shewed it the preest.
'This instrument,' quod he, 'which that thou seest,
Tak in thyn hand, and put thy-self therinne
Of this quik-silver an ounce, and heer biginne,
In the name of Crist, to wexe a philosofre.
Ther been ful fewe, whiche that I wolde profre
To shewen hem thus muche of my science.
For ye shul seen heer, by experience,
That this quik-silver wol I mortifye
Right in your sighte anon, withouten lye,
And make it as good silver and as fyn
As ther is any in your purs or myn,
Or elleswher, and make it malliable;
And elles, holdeth me fals and unable
Amonges folk for ever to appere!
I have a poudre heer, that coste me dere,
Shal make al good, for it is cause of al
My conning, which that I yow shewen shal.
Voydeth your man, and lat him be theroute,
And shet the dore, whyls we been aboute
Our privetee, that no man us espye
Whyls that we werke in this philosophye.'
Al as he bad, fulfilled was in dede,
This ilke servant anon-right out yede,
And his maister shette the dore anon,
And to hir labour speedily they gon.
This preest, at this cursed chanouns bidding,
Up-on the fyr anon sette this thing,
And blew the fyr, and bisied him ful faste;
And this chanoun in-to the croslet caste
A poudre, noot I wher-of that it was
Y-maad, other of chalk, other of glas,
Or som-what elles, was nat worth a flye,
To blynde with the preest; and bad him hye
The coles for to couchen al above
The croslet, 'for, in tokening I thee love,'
Quod this chanoun, 'thyn owene hondes two
Shul werche al thing which that shal heer be do.'
'Graunt mercy,' quod the preest, and was ful glad,
And couched coles as the chanoun bad.
And whyle he bisy was, this feendly wrecche,
This fals chanoun, the foule feend him fecche!
Out of his bosom took a bechen cole,
In which ful subtilly was maad an hole.
And ther-in put was of silver lymaille
An ounce, and stopped was, with-outen fayle,
The hole with wex, to kepe the lymail in.
And understondeth, that this false gin
Was nat maad ther, but it was maad bifore;
And othere thinges I shal telle more
Herafterward, which that he with him broghte;
Er he cam ther, him to bigyle he thoghte,
And so he dide, er that they wente a-twinne;
Til he had terved him, coude he not blinne.
It dulleth me whan that I of him speke,
On his falshede fayn wolde I me wreke,
If I wiste how; but he is heer and ther:
He is so variaunt, he abit no-wher.
But taketh heed now, sirs, for goddes love!
He took his cole of which I spak above,
And in his hond he baar it prively.
And whyls the preest couchede busily
The coles, as I tolde yow er this,
This chanoun seyde, 'freend, ye doon amis;
This is nat couched as it oghte be;

But sone I shal amenden it,' quod he.
'Now lat me medle therwith but a whyle,
For of yow have I pitee, by seint Gyle!
Ye been right hoot, I see wel how ye swete,
Have heer a cloth, and wype awey the wete.'
And whyles that the preest wyped his face,
This chanoun took his cole with harde grace,
And leyde it above, up-on the middeward
Of the croslet, and blew wel afterward,
Til that the coles gonne faste brenne.
'Now yeve us drinke,' quod the chanoun thenne,
'As swythe al shal be wel, I undertake;
Sitte we doun, and lat us mery make.'
And whan that this chanounes bechen cole
Was brent, al the lymaille, out of the hole,
Into the croslet fil anon adoun;
And so it moste nedes, by resoun,
Sin it so even aboven couched was;
But ther-of wiste the preest no-thing, alas!
He demed alle the coles y-liche good,
For of the sleighte he no-thing understood.
And whan this alkamistre saugh his tyme,
'Rys up,' quod he, 'sir preest, and stondeth by me;
And for I woot wel ingot have ye noon,
Goth, walketh forth, and bring us a chalkstoon;
For I wol make oon of the same shap
That is an ingot, if I may han hap.
And bringeth eek with yow a bolle or a panne,
Ful of water, and ye shul see wel thanne
How that our bisinesse shal thryve and preve.
And yet, for ye shul han no misbileve
Ne wrong conceit of me in your absence,
I ne wol nat been out of your presence,
But go with yow, and come with yow ageyn.'
The chambre-dore, shortly for to seyn,
They opened and shette, and wente hir weye.
And forth with hem they carieden the keye,
And come agayn with-outen any delay.
What sholde I tarien al the longe day?
He took the chalk, and shoop it in the wyse
Of an ingot, as I shal yow devyse.
I seye, he took out of his owene sleve,
A teyne of silver (yvele mote he cheve!)
Which that ne was nat but an ounce of weighte;
And taketh heed now of his cursed sleighte!
He shoop his ingot, in lengthe and eek in brede,
Of this teyne, with-outen any drede,
So slyly, that the preest it nat espyde;
And in his sleve agayn he gan it hyde;
And fro the fyr he took up his matere,
And in thingot putte it with mery chere,
And in the water-vessel he it caste
Whan that him luste, and bad the preest as faste,
'Look what ther is, put in thyn hand and grope,
Thow finde shalt ther silver, as I hope;
What, devel of helle! sholde it elles be?
Shaving of silver silver is, pardee!'
He putte his hond in, and took up a teyne
Of silver fyn, and glad in every veyne
Was this preest, whan he saugh that it was so.
'Goddes blessing, and his modres also,
And alle halwes have ye, sir chanoun,'
Seyde this preest, 'and I hir malisoun,
But, and ye vouche-sauf to techen me
This noble craft and this subtilitee,
I wol be youre, in al that ever I may!'
Quod the chanoun, 'yet wol I make assay
The second tyme, that ye may taken hede
And been expert of this, and in your nede
Another day assaye in myn absence
This disciplyne and this crafty science.
Lat take another ounce,' quod he tho,
'Of quik-silver, with-outen wordes mo,

And do ther-with as ye han doon er this
With that other, which that now silver is.'
This preest him busieth in al that he can
To doon as this chanoun, this cursed man,
Comanded him, and faste he blew the fyr,
For to come to theffect of his desyr.
And this chanoun, right in the mene whyle,
Al redy was, the preest eft to bigyle,
And, for a countenance, in his hande he bar
An holwe stikke (tak keep and be war!)
In the ende of which an ounce, and namore,
Of silver lymail put was, as bifore
Was in his cole, and stopped with wex weel
For to kepe in his lymail every deel.
And whyl this preest was in his busisnesse,
This chanoun with his stikke gan him dresse
To him anon, and his pouder caste in
As he did er; (the devel out of his skin
Him terve, I pray to god, for his falshede;
For he was ever fals in thoght and dede);
And with this stikke, above the croslet,
That was ordeyned with that false get,
He stired the coles, til relente gán
The wex agayn the fyr, as every man,
But it a fool be, woot wel it mot nede,
And al that in the stikke was out yede,
And in the croslet hastily it fel.
Now gode sirs, what wol ye bet than wel?
Whan that this preest thus was bigyled ageyn,
Supposing noght but trouthe, soth to seyn,
He was so glad, that I can nat expresse
In no manere his mirthe and his gladnesse;
And to the chanoun he profred eftsone
Body and good; 'ye,' quod the chanoun sone,
'Though povre I be, crafty thou shalt me finde;
I warne thee, yet is ther more bihinde.
Is ther any coper her-inne?' seyde he.
'Ye,' quod the preest, 'sir, I trowe wel ther be.'
'Elles go by us som, and that as swythe,
Now, gode sir, go forth thy wey and hy the.'
He wente his wey, and with the coper cam,
And this chanoun it in his handes nam,
And of that coper weyed out but an ounce.
Al to simple is my tonge to pronounce,
As ministre of my wit, the doublenesse
Of this chanoun, rote of al cursednesse.
He semed freendly to hem that knewe him noght,
But he was feendly bothe in herte and thoght.
It werieth me to telle of his falsnesse,
And nathelees yet wol I it expresse,
To thentente that men may be war therby,
And for noon other cause, trewely.
He putte his ounce of coper in the croslet,
And on the fyr as swythe he hath it set,
And caste in poudre, and made the preest to blowe,
And in his werking for to stoupe lowe,
As he dide er, and al nas but a lape;
Right as him liste, the preest he made his ape;
And afterward in the ingot he it caste,
And in the panne putte it at the laste
Of water, and in he putte his owene hond.
And in his sleve (as ye biforn-hond
Herde me telle) he hadde a silver teyne.
He slyly took it out, this cursed heyne—
Unwiting this preest of his false craft—
And in the pannes botme he hath it laft;
And in the water rombled to and fro,
And wonder prively took up also
The coper teyne, noght knowing this preest,
And hidde it, and him hente by the breest,
And to him spak, and thus seyde in his game,
'Stoupeth adoun, by god, ye be to blame,
Helpeth me now, as I dide yow whyl-er,

Putte in your hand, and loketh what is ther.'
This preest took up this silver teyne anon,
And thanne seyde the chanoun, 'lat us gon
With thise three teynes, which that we han wroght,
To som goldsmith, and wite if they been oght.
For, by my feith, I nolde, for myn hood,
But-if that they were silver, fyn and good,
And that as swythe preved shal it be.'
Un-to the goldsmith with thise teynes three
They wente, and putte thise teynes in assay
To fyr and hamer; mighte no man sey nay,
But that they weren as hem oghte be.
This sotted preest, who was gladder than he?
Was never brid gladder agayn the day,
Ne nightingale, in the sesoun of May,
Nas never noon that luste bet to singe;
Ne lady lustier in carolinge
Or for to speke of love and wommanhede,
Ne knight in armes to doon an hardy dede
To stonde in grace of his lady dere,
Than had this preest this sory craft to lere;
And to the chanoun thus he spak and seyde,
'For love of god, that for us alle deyde,
And as I may deserve it un-to yow,
What shal this receit coste? telleth now!'
'By our lady,' quod this chanoun, 'it is dere,
I warne yow wel; for, save I and a frere,
In Engelond ther can no man it make.'
'No fors,' quod he, 'now, sir, for goddes sake,
What shal I paye? telleth me, I preye.'
'Y-wis,' quod he, 'it is ful dere, I seye;
Sir, at o word, if that thee list it have,
Ye shul paye fourty pound, so god me save!
And, nere the freendship that ye dide er this
To me, ye sholde paye more, y-wis.'
This preest the somme of fourty pound anon
Of nobles fette, and took hem everichon
To this chanoun, for this ilke receit;
Al his werking nas but fraude and deceit.
'Sir preest,' he seyde, 'I kepe han no loos
Of my craft, for I wolde it kept were cloos;
And as ye love me, kepeth it secree;
For, and men knewe al my subtilitee,
By god, they wolden han so greet envye
To me, by-cause of my philosophye,
I sholde be deed, ther were non other weye.'
'God it forbede!' quod the preest, 'what sey ye?'
Yet hadde I lever spenden al the good
Which that I have (and elles wexe I wood!)
Than that ye sholden falle in swich meschees.'
'For your good wil, sir, have ye right good preef,'
Quod the chanoun, 'and far-wel, grant mercy!'
He wente his wey and never the preest him sy
After that day; and whan that this preest sholde
Maken assay, at swich tyme as he wolde,
Of this receit, far-wel! it wolde nat be!
Lo, thus byiaped and bigyled was he!
Thus maketh he his introduccioun
To bringe folk to hir destruccioun.—

Considereth, sirs, how that, in ech estaat,
Bitwixe men and gold ther is debaat
So ferforth, that unnethes is ther noon.
This multiplying blent so many oon,
That in good feith I trowe that it be
The cause grettest of swich scarsetee.
Philosophres speken so mistily
In this craft, that men can nat come therby,
For any wit that men han now a-dayes.

They mowe wel chiteren, as doon thise Iayes,
And in her termes sette hir lust and peyne,
But to hir purpos shul they never atteyne,
A man may lightly lerne, if he have aught,
To multiplye, and bringe his good to naught!
Lo! swich a lucre is in this lusty game,
A mannes mirthe it wol torne un-to grame,
And empten also grete and hevy purses,
And maken folk for to purchasen curses
Of hem, that han hir good therto y-lent.
O! fy! for shame! they that han been brent,
Allas! can they nat flee the fyres hete?
Ye that it use, I rede ye it lete,
Lest ye lese al; for bet than never is late.
Never to thryve were to long a date.
Though ye prolle ay, ye shul it never finde;
Ye been as bolde as is Bayard the blinde,
That blundreth forth, and peril casteth noon;
He is as bold to renne agayn a stoon
As for to goon besydes in the weye.
So faren ye that multiplye, I seye.
If that your yën can nat seen aright,
Loke that your minde lakke nought his sight.
For, though ye loke never so brode, and stare,
Ye shul nat winne a myte on that chaffare,
But wasten al that ye may rape and renne.
Withdrawe the fyr, lest it to faste brenne;
Medleth na-more with that art, I mene,
For, if ye doon, your thrift is goon ful clene.
And right as swythe I wol yow tellen here,
What philosophres seyn in this matere.
Lo, thus seith Arnold of the Newe Toun,
As his Rosarie maketh mencioun;
He seith right thus, with-outen any lye,
'Ther may no man Mercurie mortifye,
But it be with his brother knowleching.
How that he, which that first seyde this thing,
Of philosophres fader was, Hermes;
He seith, how that the dragoun, doutelees,
Ne deyeth nat, but-if that he be slayn
With his brother; and that is for to sayn,
By the dragoun, Mercurie and noon other
He understood; and brimstoon by his brother,
That out of *sol* and *luna* were y-drawe.
And therfor,' seyde he, 'tak heed to my sawe,
Let no man bisy him this art for to seche,
But-if that he thentencioun and speche
Of philosophres understonde can;
And if he do, he is a lewed man.
For this science and this conning,' quod he,
'Is of the secree of secrees, parde.'
Also ther was a disciple of Plato,
That on a tyme seyde his maister to,
As his book Senior wol bere witnesse,
And this was his demande in soothfastnesse:
'Tel me the name of the privy stoon?'
And Plato answerde unto him anoon,
'Tak the stoon that Titanos men name.'
'Which is that?' quod he. 'Magnesia is the same,'
Seyde Plato. 'Ye, sir, and is it thus?
This is *ignotum per ignotius*.
What is Magnesia, good sir, I yow preye?'
'It is a water that is maad, I seye,
Of elementes foure,' quod Plato.
'Tel me the rote, good sir,' quod he tho,
'Of that water, if that it be your wille?'
'Nay, nay,' quod Plato, 'certe in, that I nille.
The philosophres sworn were everichoon,
That they sholden discovere it un-to noon,
Ne in no book it wryte in no manere;
For un-to Crist it is so leef and dere
That he wol nat that it discovered be,
But wher it lyketh to his deitee
Man for tenspyre, and eek for to defende
Whom that him lyketh; lo, this is the ende.'
Thanne conclude I thus; sith god of hevene
Ne wol nat that the philosophres nevene

How that a man shal come un-to this stoon.
I rede, as for the beste, lete it goon. 1475
For who-so maketh god his adversarie,
As for to werken any thing in contrarie
Of his wil, certes, never shal he thryve,
Thogh that he multiplye terme of his lyve.
And ther a poynt; for ended is my tale;
God sende every trewe man bote of his bale! — Amen. 1481

Here is ended the Chanouns Yemannes Tale.

GROUP H.

THE MANCIPLE'S PROLOGUE.

Here folweth the Prologe of the Maunciples Tale.

WITH ye nat wher ther stant a litel toun
Which that y-cleped is Bob-up-and-doun,
Under the Blee, in Caunterbury weye?
Ther gan our hoste for to Iape and pleye,
And seyde, 'sirs, what! Dun is in the myre! 5
Is ther no man, for preyere ne for hyre,
That wol awake our felawe heer bihinde?
A theef mighte him ful lightly robbe and binde.
See how he nappeth! see, for cokkes bones,
As he wol falle from his hors at ones. 10
Is that a cook of Londoun, with meschaunce?
Do him come forth, he knoweth his penaunce,
For he shal telle a tale, by my fey!
Al-though it be nat worth a botel hey.
Awake, thou cook,' quod he, 'god yeve thee sorwe, 15
What eyleth thee to slepe by the morwe?
Hastow had fleen al night, or artow dronke,
Or hastow with som quene al night y-swonke,
So that thou mayst nat holden up thyn heed?'
This cook, that was ful pale and nothing reed, 20
Seyde to our host, 'so god my soule blesse,
As ther is falle on me swich hevinesse,
Noot I nat why, that me were lever slepe
Than the beste galoun wyn in Chepe.'
'Wel,' quod the maunciple, 'if it may doon ese 25
To thee, sir cook, and to no wight displese
Which that heer rydeth in this companye,
And that our host wol, of his curteisye,
I wol as now excuse thee of thy tale;
For, in good feith, thy visage is ful pale, 30
Thyn yën daswen eek, as that me thinketh,
And wel I woot, thy breeth ful soure stinketh,
That sheweth wel thou art not wel disposed;
Of me, certein, thou shalt nat been y-glosed.
Se how he ganeth, lo, this dronken wight, 35
As though he wolde us swolwe anonright.
Hold cloos thy mouth, man, by thy fader kin!
The devel of helle sette his foot ther-in!
Thy cursed breeth infecte wol us alle;
Fy, stinking swyn, fy! foule moot thee falle! 40
A! taketh heed, sirs, of this lusty man.
Now, swete sir, wol ye Iusten atte fan?
Ther-to me thinketh ye been wel y-shape!
I trowe that ye dronken han wyn ape,
And that is whan men pleyen with a straw.' 45
And with this speche the cook wex wrooth and wraw,
And on the maunciple he gan nodde faste
For lakke of speche, and doun the hors him caste,
Wher as he lay, til that men up him took;

This was a fayr chivachee of a cook! so
Allas! he nadde holde him by his ladel!
And, er that he agayn were in his sadel,
Ther was greet showving bothe to and fro,
To lifte him up, and muchel care and wo,
So unweldy was this sory palled gost.
And to the maunciple thanne spak our host,
'By-cause drink hath dominacioun
Upon this man, by my savacioun
I trowe he lewedly wolde telle his tale.
For, were it wyn, or old or moysty ale,
That he hath dronke, he speketh in his nose,
And fneseth faste, and eek he hath the pose.
He hath also to do more than y-nough
To kepe him and his capel out of slough;
And, if he falle from his capel eft-sone,
Than shul we alle have y-nough to done,
In lifting up his hevy dronken cors.
Telle on thy tale, of him make I no fors.
But yet, maunciple, in feith thou art to nyce,
Thus openly repreve him of his vyce.
Another day he wol, peraventure,
Reclayme thee, and bringe thee to lure;
I mene, he speke wol of smale thinges,
As for to pinchen at thy rekeninges,
That wer not honeste, if it cam to preef.'
'No,' quod the maunciple, 'that were a greet mescheef!
So mighte he lightly bringe me in the snare.
Yet hadde I lever payen for the mare
Which he rit on, than he sholde with me stryve;
I wol nat wratthe him, al-so mote I thryve!
That that I spak, I seyde it in my bourde;
And wite ye what? I have heer, in a gourde,
A draught of wyn, ye, of a rype grape,
And right anon ye shul seen a good Iape.
This cook shal drinke ther-of, if I may;
Up peyne of deeth, he wol nat seye me nay!'
And certeinly, to tellen as it was,
Of this vessel the cook drank faste, allas!
What neded him? he drank y-nough biforn.
And whan he hadde pouped in this horn,
To the maunciple he took the gourde agayn;
And of that drinke the cook was wonder fayn,
And thanked him in swich wyse as he coude.
Than gan our host to laughen wonder loude,
And seyde, 'I see wel, it is necessarie,
Wher that we goon, good drink we with us carie;
For that wol turne rancour and disese
Tacord and love, and many a wrong apese.
O thou Bachus, y-blessed be thy name,
That so canst turnen ernest in-to game!
Worship and thank be to thy deitee!
Of that matere ye gete na-more of me.
Tel on thy tale, maunciple, I thee preye.'
'Wel, sir,' quod he, 'now herkneth what I seye.'

Thus endeth the Prologe of the Manciple.

THE MAUNCIPLES TALE.

Here biginneth the Maunciples Tale of the Crowe.

WHAN Phebus dwelled here in this erthe adoun,
As olde bokes maken mencioun,
He was the moste lusty bachiler
In al this world, and eek the beste archer;
He slow Phitoun, the serpent, as he lay
Slepinge agayn the sonne upon a day;

And many another noble worthy dede
He with his bowe wroghte, as men may rede.
Pleyen he coude on every minstralcye,
And singen, that it was a melodye,
To heren of his clere vois the soun.
Certes the king of Thebes, Amphioun,
That with his singing walled that citee,
Coude never singen half so wel as he.
Therto he was the semelieste man
That is or was, sith that the world bigan.
What nedeth it his fetures to discryve?
For in this world was noon so fair on lyve.
He was ther-with fulfild of gentillesse,
Of honour, and of parfit worthinesse.
This Phebus, that was flour of bachelrye,
As wel in fredom as in chivalrye,
For his desport, in signe eek of victorie
Of Phitoun, so as telleth us the storie,
Was wont to beren in his hand a bowe.
Now had this Phebus in his hous a crowe,
Which in a cage he fostred many a day,
And taughte it speken, as men teche a Iay.
Whyt was this crowe, as is a snow-whyt swan,
And countrefete the speche of every man
He coude, whan he sholde telle a tale.
Ther-with in al this world no nightingale
Ne coude, by an hondred thousand deel,
Singen so wonder merily and weel.
Now had this Phebus in his hous a wyf,
Which that he lovede more than his lyf,
And night and day dide ever his diligence
Hir for to plese, and doon hir reverence,
Save only, if the sothe that I shal sayn,
Ialous he was, and wolde have kept hir fayn;
For him were looth by-iaped for to be.
And so is every wight in swich degree;
But al in ydel, for it availleth noght.
A good wyf, that is clene of werk and thoght,
Sholde nat been kept in noon await, certayn;
And trewely, the labour is in vayn
To kepe a shrewe, for it wol nat be.
This holde I for a verray nycetee,
To spille labour, for to kepe wyves;
Thus writen olde clerkes in hir lyves.
But now to purpos, as I first bigan:
This worthy Phebus dooth all that he can
To plesen hir, weninge by swich plesaunce,
And for his manhede and his governaunce,
That no man sholde han put him from hir grace.
But god it woot, ther may no man embrace
As to destreyne a thing, which that nature
Hath naturelly set in a creature.
Tak any brid, and put it in a cage,
And do al thyn entente and thy corage
To fostre it tendrely with mete and drinke,
Of alle deyntees that thou canst bithinke,
And keep it al-so clenly as thou may;
Al-though his cage of gold be never so gay,
Yet hath this brid, by twenty thousand fold,
Lever in a forest, that is rude and cold,
Gon ete wormes and swich wrecchednesse.
For ever this brid wol doon his bisinesse
To escape out of his cage, if he may;
His libertee this brid desireth ay.
Lat take a cat, and fostre him wel with milk,
And tendre flesh, and make his couche of silk,
And lat him seen a mous go by the wal;
Anon he weyveth milk, and flesh, and al,
And every deyntee that is in that hous,
Swich appetyt hath he to ete a mous.
Lo, here hath lust his dominacioun,
And appetyt fleméth discrecioun.
A she-wolf hath also a vileins kinde;
The lewedeste wolf that she may finde,
Or leest of reputacion wol she take,
In tyme whan hir lust to han a make.
Alle thise ensamples speke I by thise men
That been untrewe, and no-thing by wommen.

For men han ever a likerous appetyt
On lower thing to parfourne hir delyt
Than on hir wyves, be they never so faire,
Ne never so trewe, ne so debonaire.
Flesh is so newefangel, with meschaunce,
That we ne conne in no-thing han plesaunce
That souneth in-to vertu any whyle.
This Phebus, which that thoghte upon no gyle,
Deceyved was, for al his Iolitee;
For under him another hadde she,
A man of litel reputacioun,
Noght worth to Phebus in comparisoun.
The more harm is; it happeth ofte so,
Of which ther cometh muchel harm and wo.
And so bifel, whan Phebus was absent,
His wyf anon hath for hir lemman sent,
Hir lemman? certes, this is a knavish speche!
Forȝeveth it me, and that I yow biseche.
The wyse Plato seith, as ye mey rede,
The word mot nede accorde with the dede.
If men shal telle proprely a thing,
The word mot cosin be to the werking.
I am a boistous man right thus, seye I,
Ther nis no difference, trewely,
Bitwixe a wyf that is of heigh degree,
If of hir body dishonest she be,
And a povre wenche, other than this —
If it so be, they werke bothe amis — 216
But that the gentile, in estaat above,
She shal be cleped his lady, as in love;
And for that other is a povre womman,
She shal be cleped his wenche, or his lemman.
And, god it woot, myn owene dere brother,
Men leyn that oon as lowe as lyth that other.
Right so, bitwixe a titlelees tiraunt
And an outlawe, or a theef erraunt, 224
The same I seye, ther is no difference.
To Alisaundre told was this sentence;
That, for the tyrant is of gretter might,
By force of meynee for to sleen doun-right,
And brennen hous and hoom, and make al plain,
Lo! therfor is he cleped a capitain; 230
And, for the outlawe hath but smal meynee,
And may nat doon so greet an harm as he,
Ne bringe a contree to so greet meschief,
Men clepen him an outlawe or a theef.
But, for I am a man noght textuel, 235
I wol noght telle of textes never a del;
I wol go to my tale, as I bigan.
Whan Phebus wyf had sent for hir lemman,
Anon they wroghten al hir lust volage.
The whyte crowe, that heng ay in the [illegible] 240
Biheld hir werk, and seyde never a word.
And whan that hoom was come Phebus, the lord,
This crowe sang 'cokkow! cokkow! cokkow!'
'What, brid?' quod Phebus, 'what song singestow?
Ne were thow wont so merily to singe
That to myn herte it was a reioisinge 246
To here thy vois? allas! what song is this?'
'By god,' quod he, 'I singe nat amis;
Phebus,' quod he, 'for al thy worthinesse, 249
For al thy beautee and thy gentilesse,
For al thy song and al thy minstralcye,
For al thy waiting, blered is thyn yē
With oon of litel reputacioun,
Noght worth to thee, as in comparisoun,
The mountance of a gnat; so mote I thryve! 255
For on thy bed thy wyf I saugh him swyve.'
What wol ye more? the crowe anon him tolde,
By sadde tokenes and by wordes bolde,
How that his wyf had doon hir lecherye,
Him to gret shame and to gret vileinye;
And tolde him ofte, he saugh it with his yēn. 261
This Phebus gan aweyward for to wryen,
Him thoughte his sorweful herte brast a-two;
His bowe he bente, and sette ther-inne a flo,
And in his ire his wyf thanne hath he slayn. 265
This is theffect, ther is na-more to sayn;

For sorwe of which he brak his minstralcye,
Bothe harpe, and lute, and giterne, and sautrye;
And eek he brak his arwes and his bowe.
And after that, thus spak he to the crowe:
'Traitour,' quod he, 'with tonge of scorpioun,
Thou hast me broght to my confusioun!
Allas! that I was wroght! why nere I deed?
O dere wyf, o gemme of lustiheed,
That were to me so sad and eek so trewe,
Now lystow deed, with face pale of hewe,
Ful giltelees, that dorste I swere, y-wis!
O rakel hand, to doon so foule amis!
O trouble wit, o ire recchelees,
That unavysed smytest giltelees!
O wantrust, ful of fals suspecioun,
Where was thy wit and thy discrecioun?
O every man, be-war of rakelnesse,
Ne trowe no-thing with-outen strong witnesse;
Smyt nat to sone, er that we witen why,
And beeth avysed wel and sobrely
Er ye doon any execucioun,
Up-on your ire, for suspecioun.
Allas! a thousand folk hath rakel ire
Fully fordoon, and broght hem in the mire.
Allas! for sorwe I wol my-selven slee!'
And to the crowe, 'o false theef!' seyde he,
'I wol thee quyte anon thy false tale!
Thou songe whylom lyk a nightingale;
Now shaltow, false theef, thy song forgon,
And eek thy whyte fetheres everichon,
Ne never in al thy lyf ne shaltou speke.
Thus shal men on a traitour been awreke;
Thou and thyn of-spring ever shul be blake,
Ne never swete noise shul ye make,
But ever crye agayn tempest and rayn,
In tokeninge that thurgh thee my wyf is slayn.'
And to the crowe he stirte, and that anon,
And pulled his whyte fetheres everichon,
And made him blak, and refte him al his song,
And eek his speche, and out at dore him slong
Un-to the devel, which I him bitake;
And for this caas ben alle crowes blake. —
Lordings, by this ensample I yow preye,
Beth war, and taketh kepe what I seye:
Ne telleth never no man in your lyf
How that another man hath dight his wyf;
He wol yow haten mortally, certeyn.
Daun Salomon, as wyse clerkes seyn,
Techeth a man to kepe his tonge wel;
But as I seyde, I am noght texuel.
But nathelees, thus taughte me my dame:
'My sone, thenk on the crowe, a goddes name;
My sone, keep wel thy tonge and keep thy freend.
A wikked tonge is worse than a feend.
My sone, from a feend men may hem blesse;
My sone, god of his endelees goodnesse
Walled a tonge with teeth and lippes eke,
For man sholde him avyse what he speke.
My sone, ful ofte, for to muche speche,
Hath many a man ben spilt, as clerkes teche;
But for a litel speche avysely
Is no men shent, to speke generally.
My sone, thy tonge sholdestow restreyne
At alle tyme, but whan thou doost thy peyne
To speke of god, in honour and preyere.
The firste vertu, sone, if thou wolt lere,
Is to restreyne and kepe wel thy tonge. —
Thus lerne children whan that they ben yonge. —
My sone, of muchel speking yvel-avysed,
Ther lasse speking hadde y-nough suffysed,
Comth muchel harm, thus was me told and taught.
In muchel speche sinne wanteth naught.
Wostow wher-of a rakel tonge serveth?
Right as a swerd forcutteth and forkerveth
An arm a-two, my dere sone, right so
A tonge cutteth frendship al a-two.
A Iangler is to god abhominable;

Reed Salomon, so wys and honurable;
Reed David in his psalmes, reed Senekke.
My sone, spek nat, but with thyn heed thou bekke.
Dissimule as thou were deef, if that thou here
A Iangler speke of perilous matere.
The Fleming seith, and lerne it, if thee leste,
That litel Iangling causeth muchel reste.
My sone, if thou no wikked word hast seyd,
Thee thar nat drede for to be biwreyd;
But he that hath misseyd, I dar wel sayn,
He may by no wey clepe his word agayn.
Thing that is seyd, is seyd; and forth it gooth,
Though him repente, or be him leef or looth.
He is his thral to whom that he hath sayd
A tale, of which he is now yvel apayd.
My sone, be war, and be non auctour newe
Of tydinges, whether they ben false or trewe.
Wher-so thou come, amonges hye or lowe,
Kepe wel thy tonge, and thenk up-on the crowe.

Here is ended the Maunciples Tale of the Crowe.

GROUP I.

THE PARSON'S PROLOGUE.

Here folweth the Prologe of the Persones Tale.

By that the maunciple hadde his tale al ended,
The sonne fro the south lyne was descended
So lowe, that he nas nat, to my sighte,
Degreës nyne and twenty as in highte.
Foure of the clokke it was tho, as I gesse;
For eleven foot, or litel more or lesse,
My shadwe was at thilke tyme, as there,
Of swich feet as my lengthe parted were
In six feet equal of proporcioun.
Ther-with the mones exaltacioun,
I mene Libra, alwey gan ascende,
As we were entringe at a thropes ende;
For which our host, as he was wont to gye,
As in this caas, our Ioly companye,
Seyde in this wyse, 'lordings everichoon,
Now lakketh us no tales mo than oon.
Fulfild is my sentence and my decree;
I trowe that we han herd of ech degree.
Almost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce;
I prey to god, so yeve him right good chaunce,
That telleth this tale to us lustily.
Sir preest,' quod he, 'artow a vicary?
Or art a person? sey sooth, by thy fey!
Be what thou be, ne breke thou nat our pley;
For every man, save thou, hath told his tale,
Unbokel, and shewe us what is in thy male;
For trewely, me thinketh, by thy chere,
Thou sholdest knitte up wel a greet matere.
Tel us a tale anon, for cokkes bones!'
This Persone him answerde, al at ones,
'Thou getest fable noon y-told for me;
For Paul, that wryteth unto Timothee,
Repreveth hem that weyven soothfastnesse,
And tellen fables and swich wrecchednesse.
Why sholde I sowen draf out of my fest,

Whan I may sowen whete, if that me lest?
For which I seye, if that yow list to here
Moralitee and vertuous matere,
And thanne that ye wol yeve me audience,
I wol ful fayn, at Cristes reverence,
Do yow plesaunce leefful, as I can.
But trusteth wel, I am a Southren man,
I can nat geste — rum, ram, ruf — by lettre,
Ne, god wot, rym holde I but litel bettre;
And therfor, if yow list, I wol nat glose.
I wol yow telle a mery tale in prose
To knitte up al this feeste, and make an ende.
And Iesu, for his grace, wit me sende
To shewe yow the wey, in this viage,
Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrimage
That highte Ierusalem celestial.
And, if ye vouche-sauf, anon I shal
Biginne upon my tale, for whiche I preye
Telle your avys, I can no bettre seye.
But nathelees, this meditacioun
I putte it ay under correccioun
Of clerkes, for I am nat textuel;
I take but the sentens, trusteth wel.
Therfor I make protestacioun
That I wol stonde to correccioun.'
Up-on this word we han assented sone,
For, as us semed, it was for to done,
To enden in som vertuous sentence,
And for to yeve him space and audience;
And bede our host he sholde to him seye,
That alle we to telle his tale him preye.
Our host hadde the wordes for us alle:—
'Sir preest,' quod he, 'now fayre yow bifalle!
Sey what yow list, and we wol gladly here'—
And with that word he seyde in this manere—
'Telleth,' quod he, 'your meditacioun.
But hasteth yow, the sonne wol adoun;
Beth fructuous, and that in litel space,
And to do wel god sende yow his grace!'

Explicit prohemium.

THE PERSONES TALE.

HERE BIGINNETH THE PERSONES TALE.

Ier. 6°. *State super vias et videte et interrogate de viis antiquis, que sit via bona; et ambulate in ea, et inuenietis refrigerium animabus vestris, &c.*

§ 1. Our swete lord god of hevene, that no man wole perisse, but wole that we comen alle to the knoweleche of him, and to the blisful lyf that is perdurable, / amonesteth us by the prophete Ieremie, that seith in this wyse: / 'stondeth upon the weyes, and seeth and axeth of olde pathes (that is to seyn, of olde sentences) which is the goode wey; / and walketh in that wey, and ye shul finde refresshinge for your soules,' &c. / Manye been the weyes espirituels that leden folk to oure Lord Iesu Crist, and to the regne of glorie. / Of whiche weyes, ther is a ful noble wey and a ful covenable, which may nat faile to man ne to womman, that thurgh sinne hath misgoon fro the righte wey of Ierusalem celestial; / and this wey is cleped Penitence, of which man sholde gladly herknen and enquere with al his herte; / to witen what is Penitence, and whennes it is cleped Penitence, and in how manye maneres been the accions or werkinges of Penitence, / and how manye spyces ther been of Penitence, and whiche thinges apertenen and bihoven

to Penitence, and whiche thinges destourben Penitence. /

§ 2. Seint Ambrose seith, that 'Penitence is the pleyninge of man for the gilt that he hath doon, and na-more to do any thing for which him oghte to pleyne.' / And som doctour seith: 'Penitence is the waymentinge of man, that sorweth for his sinne and pyneth him-self for he hath misdoon.' / Penitence, with certeyne circumstances, is verray repentance of a man that halt him-self in sorwe and other peyne for hise giltes. / And for he shal be verray penitent, he shal first biwailen the sinnes that he hath doon, and stidefastly purposen in his herte to have shrift of mouthe, and to doon satisfaccioun, / and never to doon thing for which him oghte more to biwayle or to compleyne, and to continue in goode werkes: or elles his repentance may nat availle. / For as seith seint Isidre: 'he is a Iaper and a gabber, and no verray repentant, that eftsoone dooth thing, for which him oghte repente.' / Wepinge, and nat for to stinte to doon sinne, may nat avaylle. / But nathelees, men shal hope that every tyme that man falleth, be it never so ofte, that he may arise thurgh Penitence, if he have grace: but certeinly it is greet doute. / For as seith Seint Gregorie: 'unnethe aryseth he out of sinne, that is charged with the charge of yvel usage.' / And therfore repentant folk, that stinte for to sinne, and forlete sinne er that sinne forlete hem, holy chirche holdeth hem siker of hir savacioun. / And he that sinneth, and verraily repenteth him in his laste ende, holy chirche yet hopeth his savacioun, by the grete mercy of oure lord Iesu Crist, for his repentaunce; but tak the siker wey. /

§ 3. And now, sith I have declared yow what thing is Penitence, now shul ye understonde that ther been three accions of Penitence. / The firste accion of Penitence is, that a man be baptized after that he hath sinned. / Seint Augustin seith: 'but he be penitent for his olde sinful lyf, he may nat biginne the newe clene lif.' / For certes, if he be baptized withouten penitence of his olde gilt, he receiveth the mark of baptisme, but nat the grace ne the remission of his sinnes, til he have repentance verray. / Another defaute is this, that men doon deedly sinne after that they han received baptisme. / The thridde defaute is, that men fallen in venial sinnes after hir baptisme, fro day to day. / Ther-of seith Seint Augustin, that 'penitence of goode and humble folk is the penitence of every day.' /

§ 4. The spyces of Penitence been three. That oon of hem is solempne, another is commune, and the thridde is privee. / Thilke penance that is solempne, is in two maneres; as to be put out of holy chirche in lente, for slaughtre of children, and swich maner thing. / Another is, whan a man hath sinned openly, of which sinne the fame is openly spoken in the contree; and thanne holy chirche by Iugement destreineth him for to do open penaunce. / Commune penaunce is that preestes enioinen men comunly in certeyn caas; as for to goon, peraventure, naked in pilgrimages, or bare-foot. / Privee penaunce is thilke that men doon alday for privee sinnes, of whiche we shryve us prively and receyve privee penaunce. /

§ 5. Now shaltow understande what is bihovely and necessarie to verray parfit Penitence. And this stant on three thinges; / Contricioun of herte, Confessioun of Mouth, and Satisfaccioun. / For which seith Seint Iohn Crisostom: 'Penitence destreyneth a man to accepte benignely every peyne that him is enioyned, with contricion of herte, and shrift of mouth, with satisfaccion; and in werkinge of alle maner humilitee.' / And this is fruitful Penitence agayn three thinges in whiche we wratthe oure lord Iesu Crist: / this is to seyn, by delyt in thinkinge, by recchelesnesse in spekinge, and by wikked sinful

werkinge. / And agayns thise wikkede gilte is Penitence, that may be lykned un-to a tree. /

§ 6. The rote of this tree is Contricion, that hydeth him in the herte of him that is verray repentant, right as the rote of a tree hydeth him in the erthe. / Of the rote of Contricion springeth a stalke, that bereth braunches and leves of Confession, and fruit of Satisfaccion. / For which Crist seith in his gospel: 'dooth digne fruit of Penitence'; for by this fruit may men knowe this tree, and nat by the rote that is hid in the herte of man, ne by the braunches ne by the leves of Confession. / And therefore oure Lord Iesu Crist seith thus: 'by the fruit of hem ye shul knowen hem.' / Of this rote eek springeth a seed of grace, the which seed is moder of sikernesse, and this seed is egre and hoot. / The grace of this seed springeth of god, thurgh remembrance of the day of dome and on the peynes of helle. / Of this matere seith Salomon, that 'in the drede of god man forleteth his sinne.' / The hete of this seed is the love of god, and the desiring of the Ioye perdurable. / This hete draweth the herte of a man to god, and dooth him haten his sinne. / For soothly, ther is nothing that savoureth so wel to a child as the milk of his norice, ne no-thing is to him more abhominable than thilke milk whan it is medled with other mete. / Right so the sinful man that loveth his sinne, him semeth that it is to him most swete of any-thing; / but fro that tyme that he loveth sadly our lord Iesu Crist, and desireth the lif perdurable, ther nis to him no-thing more abhominable. / For soothly, the lawe of god is the love of god; for which David the prophete seith: 'I have loved thy lawe and hated wikkednesse and hate'; he that loveth god kepeth his lawe and his word. / This tree saugh the prophete Daniel in spirit, up-on the avision of the king Nabugodonosor, whan he conseiled him to do penitence. / Penaunce is the tree of lyf to hem that it receiven, and he that holdeth him in verray penitence is blessed; after the sentence of Salomon. /

§ 7. In this Penitence or Contricion man shal understonde foure thinges, that is to seyn, what is Contricion: and whiche been the causes that moeven a man to Contricion: and how he sholde be contrit: and what Contricion availleth to the soule. / Thanne is it thus: that Contricion is the verray sorwe that a man receiveth in his herte for his sinnes, with sad purpos to shryve him, and to do penaunce, and nevermore to do sinne. / And this sorwe shal been in this manere, as seith seint Bernard: 'it shal been hevy and grevous, and ful sharpe and poinant in herte.' / First, for man hath agilt his lord and his creatour; and more sharpe and poinant, for he hath agilt his fader celestial; / and yet more sharpe and poinant, for he hath wrathed and agilt him that boghte him; which with his precious blood hath delivered us fro the bondes of sinne, and fro the cruelte of the devel and fro the peynes of helle. /

§ 8. The causes that oghte moeve a man toContricion been six. First, a man shal remembre him of hise sinnes; / but loke he that thilke remembrance ne be to him no delyt by no wey, but greet shame and sorwe for his gilt. For Iob seith: 'sinful men doon werkes worthy of Confession.' / And therfore seith Ezechie: 'wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lyf, in bitternesse of myn herte.' / And god seith in the Apocalips: 'remembreth yow fro whennes that ye been falle'; for biforn that tyme that ye sinned, ye were the children of god, and limes of the regne of god; / but for your sinne ye been woxen thral and foul, and membres of the feend, hate of aungels, sclaundre of holy chirche, and fode of the false serpent; perpetuel matere of the fyr of helle. / And yet more foul and abhominable, for ye trespassen so ofte tyme, as doth the hound

that retourneth to eten his spewing. / And yet be ye fouler for your longe continuing in sinne and your sinful usage, for which ye be roten in your sinne, as a beest in his dong. / Swiche manere of thoghtes maken a man to have shame of his sinne, and no delyt, as god seith by the prophete Ezechiel. / 'Ye shal remembre yow of youre weyes, and they shuln displese yow.' Sothly, sinnes been the weyes that leden folk to helle. /

§ 9. The seconde cause that oghte make a man to have desdeyn of sinne is this: that, as seith seint Peter, 'who-so that doth sinne is thral of sinne'; and sinne put a man in greet thraldom. / And therfore seith the prophete Ezechiel: 'I wente sorweful in desdayn of my-self.' And certes, wel oghte a man have desdayn of sinne, and withdrawe him from that thraldom and vileinye. / And lo, what seith Seneca in this matere. He seith thus: 'though I wiste that neither god ne man ne sholde nevere knowe it, yet wolde I have desdayn for to do sinne.' / And the same Seneca also seith: 'I am born to gretter thinges than to be thral to my body, or than for to maken of my body a thral.' / Ne a fouler thral may no man ne womman maken of his body, than for to yeven his body to sinne. / Al were it the fouleste cherl, or the fouleste womman that liveth, and leest of value, yet is he thanne more foule and more in servitute. / Evere fro the hyer degree that man falleth, the more is he thral, and more to god and to the world vile and abhominable. / O gode god, wel oghte man have desdayn of sinne; sith that, thurgh sinne, ther he was free, now is he maked bonde. / And therfore seyth Seint Augustin: 'if thou hast desdayn of thy servant, if he agilte or sinne, have thou thanne desdayn that thou thy-self sholdest do sinne.' / Take reward of thy value, that thou ne be to foul to thy-self. / Allas! wel oghten they thanne have desdayn to been servauntz and thralles to sinne, and sore been ashamed of hem-self, / that god of his endelees goodnesse hath set hem in heigh estaat, or yeven hem wit, strengthe of body, hele, beautee, prosperitee, / and boghte hem fro the deeth with his herte blood, that they so unkindely, agayns his gentilesse, quyten him so vileinsly, to slaughtre of hir owene soules. / O gode god, ye wommen that been of so greet beautee, remembreth yow of the proverbe of Salomon, that seith: / 'he lykneth a fair womman, that is a fool of hir body, lyk to a ring of gold that were in the groyn of a sowe.' / For right as a sowe wroteth in everich ordure, so wroteth she hir beautee in the stinkinge ordure of sinne. /

§ 10. The thridde cause that oghte moeve a man to Contricion, is drede of the day of dome, and of the horrible peynes of helle. / For as seint Ierome seith: 'at every tyme that me remembreth of the day of dome, I quake; / for whan I ete or drinke, or what-so that I do, evere semeth me that the trompe sowneth in myn ere: / riseth up, ye that been dede, and cometh to the Iugement.' / O gode god, muchel oghte a man to drede swich a Iugement, 'ther-as we shullen been alle,' as seint Poul seith, 'biforn the sete of oure lord Iesu Crist'; / wher-as he shal make a general congregacion, wher-as no man may been absent. / For certes, there availleth noon essoyne ne excusacion. / And nat only that oure defautes shullen be iuged, but eek that alle oure werkes shullen openly be knowe. / And as seith Seint Bernard: 'ther ne shal no pledinge availle, ne no sleighte; we shullen yeven rekeninge of everich ydel word.' / Ther shul we han a Iuge that may nat been deceived ne corrupt. And why? For, certes, alle our thoghtes been discovered as to him; ne for preyere ne for mede he shal nat been corrupt. / And therfore seith Salomon: 'the wratthe of

god ne wol nat spare no wight, for preyere ne for yifte'; and therfore, at the day of doom, ther nis noon hope to escape. / Wherfore, as seith Seint Anselm: 'ful greet angwissh shul the sinful folk have at that tyme; / ther shal the sterne and wrothe Iuge sitte above, and under him the horrible put of helle open to destroyen him that moot biknowen hise sinnes, whiche sinnes openly been shewed biforn god and biforn every creature. / And on the left syde, mo develes than herte may bithinke, for to harie and drawe the sinful soules to the pyne of helle. / And with-inne the hertes of folk shal be the bytinge conscience, and without-forth shal be the world al brenninge. / Whider shal thanne the wrecched sinful man flee to hyden him? Certes, he may nat hyden him; he moste come forth and shewen him.' / For certes, as seith seint Ierome: 'the erthe shal casten him out of him, and the see also; and the eyr also, that shal be ful of thonder-clappes and lightninges.' / Now sothly, who-so wel remembreth him of thise thinges, I gesse that his sinne shal nat turne him in-to delyt, but to greet sorwe, for drede of the peyne of helle. / And therfore seith Iob to god: 'suffre, lord, that I may a whyle biwaille and wepe, er I go with-oute returning to the derke lond, covered with the derknesse of deeth; / to the lond of misese and of derknesse, where-as is the shadwe of deeth; where-as ther is noon ordre or ordinance, but grisly drede that evere shal laste.' / Lo, here may ye seen that Iob preyde respyt a whyle, to biwepe and waille his trespas; for soothly oon day of respyt is bettre than al the tresor of the world. / And for-as-muche as a man may acquiten him-self biforn god by penitence in this world, and nat by tresor, therfore sholde he preye to god to yeve him respyt a whyle, to biwepe and biwaillen his trespas. / For certes, al the sorwe that a man mighte make fro the beginning of the world, nis but a litel thing at regard of the sorwe of helle. / The cause why that Iob clepeth helle 'the lond of derknesse'; / under-stondeth that he clepeth it 'londe' or erthe, for it is stable, and nevere shal faille; 'derk,' for he that is in helle hath defaute of light material. / For certes, the derke light, that shal come out of the fyr that evere shal brenne, shal turne him al to peyne that is in helle; for it sheweth him to the horrible develes that him tormenten. / 'Covered with the derknesse of deeth': that is to seyn, that he that is in helle shal have defaute of the sighte of god; for certes, the sighte of god is the lyf perdurable. / 'The derknesse of deeth' been the sinnes that the wrecched man hath doon, whiche that destourben him to see the face of god; right as doth a derk cloude bitwixe us and the sonne. / 'Lond of misese': by-cause that ther been three maneres of defautes, agayn three thinges that folk of this world han in this present lyf, that is to seyn, honours, delyces, and richesses. / Agayns honour, have they in helle shame and confusion. / For wel ye woot that men clepen 'honour' the reverence that man doth to man; but in helle is noon honour ne reverence. For certes, na-more reverence shal be doon there to a king than to a knave. / For which god seith by the prophete Ieremye: 'thilke folk that me despysen shul been in despyt.' / 'Honour' is eek cleped greet lordshipe; ther shal no man serven other but of harm and torment. 'Honour' is eek cleped greet dignitee and heighnesse; but in helle shul they been al fortroden of develes. / And god seith: 'the horrible develes shulle goon and comen up-on the hevedes of the dampned folk.' And this is for-as-muche as, the hyer that they were in this present lyf, the more shulle they been abated and defouled in helle. / Agayns the richesses of this world, shul they han misese of pov-

erte; and this poverte shal been in foure thinges: / in defaute of tresor, of which that David seith; 'the riche folk, that embraceden and oneden al hir herte to tresor of this world, shul slepe in the slepinge of deeth; and no-thing ne shul they finden in hir handes of al hir tresor.' / And more-over, the miseise of helle shal been in defaute of mete and drinke. / For god seith thus by Moyses; 'they shul been wasted with hunger, and the briddes of helle shul devouren hem with bitter deeth, and the galle of the dragon shal been hir drinke, and the venim of the dragon hir mor-
195 sels.' / And forther-over, hir miseise shal been in defaute of clothing: for they shulle be naked in body as of clothing, save the fyr in which they brenne and othere filthes; / and naked shul they been of soule, of alle manere vertues, which that is the clothing of the soule. Where been thanne the gaye robes and the softe shetes and the smale shertes? / Lo, what seith god of hem by the prophete Isaye: 'that under hem shul been strawed motthes, and hir covertures shulle been of wormes of helle.' / And forther-over, hir miseise shal been in defaute of freendes; for he nis nat povre that hath goode freendes, but there is no freend; / for neither god ne no creature shal been freend to hem, and everich of hem shal haten other with deedly
200 hate. / 'The sones and the doghtren shullen rebellen agayns fader and mooder, and kinrede agayns kinrede, and chyden and despysen everich of hem other,' bothe day and night, as god seith by the prophete Michias. / And the lovinge children, that whylom loveden so fleshly everich other, wolden everich of hem eten other if they mighte. / For how sholden they love hem togidre in the peyne of helle, whan they hated ech of hem other in the prosperitee of this lyf? / For truste wel, hir fleshly love was deedly hate; as seith the prophete David: 'who-so that loveth wikkednesse, he hateth his soule.' / And who-so hateth his owene soule, certes, he may love noon other wight in no manere. / And 205 therefore, in helle is no solas ne no frendshipe, but evere the more fleshly kinredes that been in helle, the more cursinges, the more chydinges, and the more deedly hate ther is among hem. / And forther-over, they shul have defaute of alle manere delyces; for certes, delyces been after the appetytes of the fyve wittes, as sighte, heringe, smellinge, savoringe, and touchinge. / But in helle hir sighte shal be ful of derknesse and of smoke, and therfore ful of teres; and hir heringe, ful of waymentinge and of grintinge of teeth, as seith Iesu Crist; / hir nosethirles shullen be ful of stinkinge stink. And as seith Isaye the prophete: 'hir savoring shal be ful of bitter galle.' / And touchinge of al hir body, y-covered with 'fyr that nevere shal quenche, and with wormes that nevere shul dyen,' as god seith by the mouth of Isaye. / And for- 210 as-muche as they shul nat wene that they may dyen for peyne, and by hir deeth flee fro peyne, that may they understonden by the word of Iob, that seith: 'ther-as is the shadwe of deeth.' / Certes, a shadwe hath the lyknesse of the thing of which it is shadwe, but shadwe is nat the same thing of which it is shadwe. / Right so fareth the peyne of helle; it is lyk deeth for the horrible anguissh, and why? For it peyneth hem evere, as though they sholde dye anon; but certes they shal nat dye. / For as seith Seint Gregorie: 'to wrecche caytives shal be deeth with-oute deeth, and ende with-outen ende, and defaute with-oute failinge. / For hir deeth shal alwey liven, and hir ende shal everemo biginne, and hir defaute shal nat faille.' / And therfore seith 215 Seint Iohn the Evangelist: 'they shullen folwe deeth, and they shul nat finde him; and they shul desyren to dye, and deeth shal flee fro hem.' / And eek Iob seith: that 'in helle is

noon ordre of rule.' / And al-be-it so that god hath creat alle thinges in right ordre, and no-thing with-outen ordre, but alle thinges been ordeyned and nombred; yet nathelees they that been dampned been no-thing in ordre, ne holden noon ordre. / For the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruit. / For, as the prophete David seith: 'god shal destroie the fruit of the erthe as fro hem;' ne water ne shal yeve hem no moisture; ne the eyr no refresshing, ne fyr no light. / For as seith seint Basilie: 'the brenninge of the fyr of this world shal god yeven in helle to hem that been dampned; / but the light and the cleernesse shal be yeven in hevene to hise children'; right as the gode man yeveth flesh to hise children, and bones to his houndes. / And for they shullen have noon hope to escape, seith seint Iob atte laste: that 'ther shal horrour and grisly drede dwellen with-outen ende.' / Horrour is alwey drede of harm that is to come, and this drede shal evere dwelle in the hertes of hem that been dampned. And therefore han they lorn al hir hope, for sevene causes. / First, for god that is hir Iuge shal be with-outen mercy to hem; ne they may nat plese him, ne noon of hise halwes; ne they ne may yeve no-thing for hir raunson; / ne they have no vois to speke to him; ne they may nat flee fro peyne; ne they have no goodnesse in hem, that they mowe shewe to delivere hem fro peyne. / And therfore seith Salomon: 'the wikked man dyeth; and whan he is deed, he shal have noon hope to escape fro peyne.' / Who-so thanne wolde wel understande these peynes, and bithinke him weel that he hath deserved thilke peynes for his sinnes, certes, he sholde have more talent to syken and to wepe than for to singen and to pleye. / For as that seith Salomon: 'who-so that hadde the science to knowe the peynes that been establissed and ordeyned for sinne, he wolde make sorwe.' / 'Thilke science,' as seith seint Augustin, 'maketh a man to waymenten in his herte.' /

§ 11. The fourthe point, that oghte maken a man to have contricion, is the sorweful remembrance of the good that he hath left to doon here in earthe; and eek the good that he hath lorn. / Soothly, the gode werkes that he hath left, outher they been the gode werkes that he wroghte er he fel in-to deedly sinne, or elles the gode werkes that he wroghte while he lay in sinne. / Soothly, the gode werkes, that he dide biforn that he fil in sinne, been al mortified and astoned and dulled by the ofte sinning. / The othere gode werkes, that he wroghte whyl he lay in deedly sinne, they been outrely dede as to the lyf perdurable in hevene. / Thanne thilke gode werkes that been mortified by ofte sinning, whiche gode werkes he dide whyl he was in charitee, ne mowe nevere quiken agayn with-outen verray penitence. / And ther-of seith god, by the mouth of Ezechiel: that, 'if the rightful man returne agayn from his rightwisnesse and werke wikkednesse, shal he live?' / Nay; for alle the gode werkes that he hath wroght ne shul nevere been in remembrance; for he shal dyen in his sinne. / And up-on thilke chapitre seith seint Gregorie thus: 'that we shulle understonde this principally; / that whan we doon deedly sinne, it is for noght thanne to rehercen or drawen in-to memorie the gode werkes that we han wroght biforn.' / For certes, in the werkinge of the deedly sinne, ther is no trust to no good werk that we han doon biforn; that is to seyn, as for to have therby the lyf perdurable in hevene. / But nathelees, the gode werkes quiken agayn, and comen agayn, and helpen, and availlen to have the lyf perdurable in hevene, whan we han contricion. / But soothly, the gode werkes that men doon whyl they been in deedly sinne, for-as-muche as they were doon in deedly sinne, they may nevere quiken agayn. / For certes,

thing that nevere hadde lyf may nevere quikene; and nathelees, albe-it that they ne availle noght to han the lyf perdurable, yet availlen they to abregge of the peyne of helle, or elles to geten temporal richesse, / or elles that god wole the rather enlumine and lightne the herte of the sinful man to have repentance; / and eek they availlen for to usen a man to doon gode werkes, that the feend have the lasse power of his soule. / And thus the curteis lord Iesu Crist wole that no good werk be lost; for in somwhat it shal availle. / But for-as-muche as the gode werkes that men doon whyl they been in good lyf, been al mortified by sinne folwinge; and eek, sith that alle the gode werkes that men doon whyl they been in deedly synne, been outrely dede as for to have the lyf perdurable; / wel may that man, that no good werke ne dooth, singe thilke newe Frenshe song: "*Iay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour.*" / For certes, sinne bireveth a man bothe goodnesse of nature and eek the goodnesse of grace. / For soothly, the grace of the holy goost fareth lyk fyr, that may nat been ydel; for fyr faileth anoon as it forleteth his wirkinge, and right so grace fayleth anoon as it forleteth his werkinge. / Than leseth the sinful man the goodnesse of glorie, that only is bihight to gode men that labouren and werken. / Wel may he be sory thanne, that oweth al his lif to god as longe as he hath lived, and eek as longe as he shal live, that no goodnesse ne hath to paye with his dette to god, to whom he oweth al his lyf. / For trust wel, 'he shal yeven acountes,' as seith seint Bernard, 'of alle the godes that han be yeven him in this present lyf, and how he hath hem despended; / in so muche that ther shal nat perisse an heer of his heed, ne a moment of an houre ne shal nat perisse of his tyme, that he ne shal yeve of it a rekening.' /

§ 12. The fifthe thing that oghte moeve a man to contricion, is remembrance of the passion that oure lord Iesu Crist suffred for our sinnes. / For, as seith seint Bernard: 'whyl that I live, I shal have remembrance of the travailles that oure lord Crist suffred in preching; / his wearinesse in travailling, hise temptacions whan he fasted, hise longe wakinges whan he preyde, hise teres whan that he weep for pitee of good peple; / the wo and the shame and the filthe that men seyden to him; of the foule spitting that men spitte in his face, of the buffettes that men yaven him, of the foule mowes, and of the repreves that men to him seyden; / of the nayles with whiche he was nailed to the croys, and of al the remenant of his passion that he suffred for my sinnes, and no-thing for his gilt.' / And ye shul understonde, that in mannes sinne is every manere of ordre or ordinance turned up-so-doun. / For it is sooth, that god, and reson, and sensualitee, and the body of man been so ordeyned, that everich of thise foure thinges sholde have lordshipe over that other; / as thus: god sholde have lordshipe over reson, and reson over sensualitee, and sensualitee over the body of man. / But sothly, whan man sinneth, al this ordre or ordinance is turned up-so-doun. / And therfore thanne, for-as-muche as the reson of man ne wol nat be subget ne obeisant to god, that is his lord by right, therfore leseth it the lordshipe that it sholde have over sensualitee, and eek over the body of man. / And why? For sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns reson; and by that wey leseth reson the lordshipe over sensualitee and over the body. / For right as reson is rebel to god, right so is bothe sensualitee rebel to reson and the body also. / And certes, this disordinance and this rebellion oure lord Iesu Crist aboghte up-on his precious body ful dere, and herkneth in which wyse. / For-as-muche thanne as reson is rebel to god, therfore is man worthy to have sorwe and

to be deed. / This suffred oure lord Iesu Crist for man, after that he hadde be bitraysed of his disciple, and distreyned and bounde, 'so that his blood brast out at every nail of hise handes,' as seith seint Augustin. / And forther-over, for-as-muchel as reson of man ne wol nat daunte sensualitee whan it may, therfore is men worthy to have shame; and this suffred oure lord Iesu Crist for man, whan they spetten in his visage. / And forther-over, for-as-muchel thanne as the caitif body of man is rebel bothe to reson and to sensualitee, therfore is it worthy the deeth. / And this suffred oure lord Iesu Crist for man upon the croys, where-as ther was no part of his body free, with-outen greet peyne and bitter passion. / And al this suffred Iesu Crist, that nevere forfeted. And therfore resonably may be seyd of Iesu in this manere: 'to muchel am I peyned for the thinges that I nevere deserved, and to muche defouled for shend-shipe that man is worthy to have.' / And therfore may the sinful man wel seye, as seith seint Bernard: 'acursed be the bitternesse of my sinne, for which ther moste be suffred so muchel bitternesse.' / For certes, after the diverse discordances of oure wikkednesses, was the passion of Iesu Crist ordeyned in diverse thinges, / as thus. Certes, sinful mannes soule is bitraysed of the devel by coveitise of temporel prosperitee, and scorned by deceite whan he cheseth fleshly delyces; and yet is it tormented by inpacience of adversitee, and bispet by servage and subieccion of sinne; and atte laste it is slayn fynally. / For this disordinaunce of sinful man was Iesu Crist first bitraysed, and after that was he bounde, that cam for to unbynden us of sinne and peyne. / Thanne was he biscorned, that only sholde han been honoured in alle thinges and of alle thinges. / Thanne was his visage, that oghte be desired to be seyn of al man-kinde, in which visage aungels desyren to looke, vileynsly bispet. / Thanne was he scourged that no-thing hadde agilt; and fynally, thanne was he crucified and slayn. / Thanne was acompliced the word of Isaye: 'he was wounded for oure misdedes, and defouled for oure felonies.' / Now sith that Iesu Crist took up-on him-self the peyne of alle oure wikkednesses, muchel oghte sinful man wepen and biwayle, that for hise sinnes goddes sone of hevene sholde al this peyne endure. /

§ 13. The sixte thing that oghte moeve a man to contricion, is the hope of three thynges; that is to seyn, foryifnesse of sinne, and the yifte of grace wel for to do, and the glorie of hevene, with which god shal guerdone a man for hise gode dedes. / And for-as-muche as Iesu Crist yeveth us thise yiftes of his largesse and of his sovereyn bountee, therfore is he cleped *Iesus Nazarenus rex Iudeorum*. / Iesus is to seyn 'saveour' or 'salvacion,' on whom men shul hope to have foryifnesse of sinnes, which that is proprely salvacion of sinnes. / And therfore seyde the aungel to Ioseph: 'thou shalt clepen his name Iesus, that shal saven his peple of hir sinnes.' / And heer-of seith seint Peter: 'ther is noon other name under hevene that is yeve to any man, by which a man may be saved, but only Iesus.' / *Nazarenus* is as muche for to seye as 'florisshinge,' in which a man shal hope, that he that yeveth him remission of sinnes shal yeve him eek grace wel for to do. For in the flour is hope of fruit in tyme cominge; and in foryifnesse of sinnes hope of grace wel for to do. / 'I was atte dore of thyn herte,' seith Iesus, 'and cleped for to entre; he that openeth to me shal have foryifnesse of sinne. / I wol entre in-to him by my grace,' and soupe with him,' by the goode werkes that he shal doon; whiche werkes been the foode of god; 'and he shal soupe with me,' by the grete Ioye that I shal yeven him. / Thus shal man hope, for hise werkes of penaunce,

that god shall yeven him his regne; as he bihoteth him in the gospel. /

§ 14. Now shal a man understonde, in which manere shal been his contricion. I seye, that it shal been universal and total; this is to seyn, a man shal be verray repentant for alle hise sinnes that he hath doon in delyt of his thoght; for delyt is ful perilous. / For ther been two manere of consentinges; that oon of hem is cleped consentinge of affeccion, when a man is moeved to do sinne, and delyteth him longe for to thinke on that sinne; / and his reson aperceyveth it wel, that is is sinne agayns the lawe of god, and yet his reson refreyneth nat his foul delyt or talent, though he se wel apertly that it is agayns the reverence of god; al-though his reson ne consente noght to doon that sinne in dede, / yet seyn somme doctours that swich delyt that dwelleth longe, it is ful perilous, al be it nevere so lite. / And also a man sholde sorwe, namely, for al that evere he hath desired agayn the lawe of god with perfit consentinge of his reson; for ther-of is no doute, that it is deedly sinne in consentinge. / For certes, ther is no deedly sinne, that it nas first in mannes thought, and after that in his delyt; and so forth in-to consentinge and in-to dede. / Wherfore I seye, that many men ne repenten hem nevere of swiche thoghtes and delytes, ne nevere shryven hem of it, but only of the dede of grete sinnes outward. / Wherfore I seye, that swiche wikked delytes and wikked thoghtes been subtile bigyleres of hem that shullen be dampned. / More-over, man oghte to sorwe for hise wikkede wordes as wel as for hise wikkede dedes; for certes, the repentance of a singuler sinne, and nat repente of alle hise othere sinnes, or elles repenten him of alle hise othere sinnes, and nat of a singuler sinne, may nat availe. / For certes, god almighty is al good; and ther-fore he foryeveth al, or elles right noght. / And heer-of seith seint Augustin: 'I woot certeinly / that god is enemy to everich sinnere'; and how thanne? He that observeth o sinne, shal he have foryifnesse of the remenaunt of hise othere sinnes? Nay. / And forther-over, contricion sholde be wonder sorweful and anguissous, and therfore yeveth him god pleynly his mercy; and therfore, whan my soule was anguissous with-inne me, I hadde remembrance of god that my preyere mighte come to him. / Forther-over, contricion moste be continuel, and that man have stedefast purpos to shryven him, and for to amenden him of his lyf. / For soothly, whyl contricion lasteth, man may evere have hope of foryifnesse; and of this comth hate of sinne, that destroyeth sinne bothe in him-self, and eek in other folk, at his power. / For which seith David: 'ye that loven god hateth wikkednesse.' For trusteth wel, to love god is for to love that he loveth, and hate that he hateth. /

§ 15. The laste thing that man shal understonde in contricion is this; wher-of avayleth contricion. I seye, that somtyme contricion delivereth a man fro sinne; / of which that David seith: 'I seye,' quod David, that is to seyn, 'I purposed fermely to shryve me; and thow, Lord, relesedest my sinne.' / And right so as contricion availleth noght, with-outen sad purpos of shrifte, if man have oportunitee, right so litel worth is shrifte or satisfaccion with-outen contricion. / And more-over, contricion destroyeth the prison of helle, and maketh wayk and feble alle the strengthes of the develes, and restoreth the yiftes of the holy goost and of alle gode vertues; / and it clenseth the soule of sinne, and delivereth the soule fro the peyne of helle, and fro the companye of the devel, and fro the servage of sinne, and restoreth it to alle godes espirituels, and to the companye and communion of holy chirche. / And forther-over, it maketh him that whylom was sone of ire to be sone

of grace; and alle thise thinges been preved by holy writ. / And therfore, he that wolde sette his entente to thise thinges, he were ful wys; for soothly, he ne sholde nat thanne in al his lyf have corage to sinne, but yeven his body and al his herte to the service of Iesu Crist, and ther-of doon him hommage. / For soothly, oure swete lord Iesu Crist hath spared us so debonairly in our folies, that if he ne hadde pitee of mannes soule, a sory song we mighten alle singe. /

Explicit prima pars Penitentie; et sequitur secunda pars eiusdem.

§ 16. The seconde partie of Penitence is Confession, that is signe of contricion. / Now shul ye understonde what is Confession, and whether it oghte nedes be doon or noon, and whiche thinges been covenable to verray Confession. /

§ 17. First shaltow understonde that Confession is verray shewinge of sinnes to the preest; / this is to seyn 'verray,' for he moste confessen him of alle the condicioun that bilongen to his sinne, as ferforth as he can. / Al moof be seyd, and no thing excused ne hid ne forwrapped, and noght avaunte him of his gode werkes. / And forther over, it is necessarie to understonde whennes that sinnes springen, and how they encresen, and whiche they been. /

§ 18. Of the springinge of sinnes seith seint Paul in this wise: that 'right as by a man sinne entred first in-to this world, and thurgh that sinne deeth, right so thilke deeth entred in-to alle men that sinneden.' / And this man was Adam, by whom sinne entred in-to this world whan he brak the comaundement of god. / And therfore, he that first was so mighty that he sholde not have dyed, bicam swich oon that he moste nedes dye, whether he wolde or noon; and all his progenie in this world that in thilke man sinneden. / Loke that in thestaat of innocence, when Adam and Eve naked weren in paradys, and no-thing ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse, / how that the serpent, that was most wyly of alle othere bestes that god hadde maked, seyde to the womman: 'why comaunded god to yow, ye sholde nat eten of every tree in paradys?' / The womman answerde: 'of the fruit,' quod she, 'of the trees in paradys we feden us; but soothly, of the fruit of the tree that is in the middel of paradys, god forbad us for to ete, ne nat touchen it, lest per-aventure we should dyen.' / The serpent seyde to the womman: 'nay, nay, ye shul nat dyen of deeth; for sothe, god woot, that what day that ye eten ther-of, youre eyen shul opene, and ye shul been as goddes, knowinge good and harm.' / The womman thanne saugh that the tree was good to feding, and fair to the eyen, and delytable to the sighte; she tok of the fruit of the tree, and eet it, and yaf to hir housbonde, and he eet; and anoon the eyen of hem bothe openeden. / And whan that they knewe that they were naked, they sowed of fige-leves a manere of breches to hiden hir membres. / There may ye seen that deedly sinne hath first suggestion of the feend, as sheweth here by the naddre; and afterward, the delyt of the flesh, as sheweth here by Eve; and after that, the consentinge of resoun, as sheweth here by Adam. / For trust wel, thogh so were that the feend tempted Eve, that is to seyn the flesh, and the flesh hadde delyt in the beautee of the fruit defended, yet certes, til that resoun, that is to seyn, Adam, consented to the etinge of the fruit, yet stood he in thestaat of innocence. / Of thilke Adam toke we thilke sinne original; for of him fleshly descended be we alle, and engendred of vile and corrupt matere. / And whan the soule is put in our body, right anon is contract original sinne; and that, that was erst but only peyne of concupiscence, is afterward bothe peyne and sinne. / And therfore be we

alle born sones of wratthe and of dampnacion perdurable, if it nere baptesme that we receyven, which binimeth us the culpe; but for sothe, the peyne dwelleth with us, as to temptacion, which peyne highte concupiscence. / Whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordeyned in man, it maketh him coveite, by coveitise of flesh, fleshly sinne, by sighte of hise eyen as to erthely thinges, and coveitise of hynesse by pryde of herte. /

§ 19. Now as for to speken of the firste coveitise, that is, concupiscence after the lawe of oure membres, that weren lawefulliche y-maked and by rightful Iugement of god; / I seye, for-as-muche as man is nat obeisaunt to god, that is his lord, therfore is the flesh to him disobeisaunt thurgh concupiscence, which yet is cleped norissinge of sinne and occasion of sinne. / Therfore, al the whyle that a man hath in him the peyne of concupiscence, it is impossible but he be tempted somtyme, and moeved in his flesh to sinne. / And this thing may nat faille as longe as he liveth; it may wel wexe feble and faille, by vertu of baptesme and by the grace of god thurgh penitence; / but fully ne shal it nevere quenche, that he ne shal somtyme be moeved in him-self, but-if he were al refreyded by siknesse, or by malefice of sorcerie or colde drinkes. / For lo, what seith seint Paul: 'the flesh coveiteth agayn the spirit, and the spirit agayn the flesh; they been so contrarie and so stryven, that a man may nat alwey doon as he wolde.' / The same seint Paul, after his grete penaunce in water and in lond (in water by night and by day, in greet peril and in greet peyne, in lond, in famine, in thurst, in cold and clothlees, and ones stoned almost to the deeth) / yet seyde he: 'allas! I, caytif man, who shal delivere me fro the prisoun of my caytif body?' / And seint Ierome, whan he longe tyme hadde woned in desert, where-as he hadde no companye but of wilde bestes, where-as he ne hadde no mete but herbes and water to his drinke, ne no bed but the naked erthe, for which his flesh was blak as an Ethiopen for hete and ny destroyed for cold, / yet seyde he: that 'the brenninge of lecherie boiled in al his body.' / Wherfore I woot wel sikerly, that they been deceyved that seyn, that they ne be nat tempted in hir body. / Witnesse on Seint Iame the Apostel, that seith: that 'every wight is tempted in his owen concupiscence'; that is to seyn, that everich of us hath matere and occasion to be tempted of the norissinge of sinne that is in his body. / And therfore seith Seint Iohn the Evaungelist: 'if that we seyn that we beth with-oute sinne, we deceyve us-selve, and trouthe is nat in us.' /

§ 20. Now shal ye understonde in what manere that sinne wexeth or encreseth in man. The firste thing is thilke norissinge of sinne, of which I spak biforn, thilke fleshly concupiscence. / And after that comth the subieccion of the devel, this is to seyn, the develes bely, with which he bloweth in man the fyr of fleshly concupiscence. / And after that, a man bithinketh him whether he wol doon, or no, thilke thing to which he is tempted. / And thanne, if that a man withstonde and weyve the firste entysinge of his flesh and of the feend, thanne is it no sinne; and if it so be that he do nat so, thanne feleth he anon a flambe of delyt. / And thanne is it good to be war, and kepen him wel, or elles he wol falle anon in-to consentinge of sinne; and thanne wol he do it, if he may have tyme and place. / And of this matere seith Moyses by the devel in this manere: 'the feend seith, I wole chace and pursue the man by wikked suggestion, and I wole hente him by moevynge or stiringe of sinne. I wol departe my pryse or my praye by deliberacion, and my lust shal been accompliced in delyt; I wol drawe my swerd in consentinge:' / for certes, right as a swerd departeth a thing in two peces, right so consent-

inge departeth god fro man: 'and thanne wol I sleen him with myn hand in dede of sinne'; thus seith the feend. / For certes, thanne is a man al deed in soule. And thus is sinne accompliced by temptacion, by delyt, and by consentinge; and thanne is the sinne cleped actuel. /

§ 21. For sothe, sinne is in two maneres; outher it is venial, or deedly sinne. Soothly, whan man loveth any creature more than Iesu Crist oure creatour, thanne is it deedly sinne. And venial synne is it, if man love Iesu Crist lasse than him oghte. / For sothe, the dede of this venial sinne is ful perilous; for it amenuseth the love that men sholde han to god more and more. / And therfore, if a man charge himself with manye swiche venial sinnes, certes, but-if so be that he som tyme descharge him of hem by shrifte, they mowe ful lightly amenuse in him al the love that he hath to Iesu Crist; / and in this wise skippeth venial in-to deedly sinne. For certes, the more that a man chargeth his soule with venial sinnes, the more is he enclyned to fallen in-to deedly sinne. / And therfore, let us nat be necligent to deschargen us of venial sinnes. For the proverbe seith: that manye smale maken a greet. / And herkne this ensample. A greet wawe of the see comth som-tyme with so greet a violence that it drencheth the ship. And the same harm doth som-tyme the smale dropes of water, that entren thurgh a litel crevace in-to the thurrok, and in-to the botme of the ship, if men be so necligent that they ne descharge hem nat by tyme. / And therfore, al-thogh ther be a difference bitwixe thise two causes of drenchinge, algates the ship is dreynt. / Right so fareth it somtyme of deedly sinne, and of anoyouse veniale sinnes, whan they multiplye in a man so greetly, that thilke worldly thinges that he loveth, thurgh whiche he sinneth venially, is as greet in his herte as the love of god, or more. / And therfore, the love of every thing, that is nat biset in god ne doon principally for goddes sake, al-though that a man love it lasse than god, yet is it venial sinne; / and deedly sinne, whan the love of any thing weyeth in the herte of man as muchel as the love of god, or more. / 'Deedly sinne,' as seith seint Augustin, 'is, whan a man turneth his herte fro god, which that is verray sovereyn bountee, that may nat chaunge, and yeveth his herte to thing that may chaunge and flitte'; / and certes, that is every thing, save god of hevene. For sooth is, that if a man yeve his love, the which that he oweth al to god with al his herte, un-to a creature, certes, as muche of his love as he yeveth to thilke creature, so muche he bireveth fro god; / and therfore doth he sinne. For he, that is dettour to god, ne yeldeth nat to god al his dette, that is to seyn, al the love of his herte. /

§ 22. Now sith man understondeth generally, which is venial sinne, thanne is it covenable to tellen specially of sinnes whiche that many a man per-aventure ne demeth hem nat sinnes, and ne shryveth him nat of the same thinges; and yet nathelees they been sinnes. / Soothly, as thise clerkes wryten, this is to seyn, that at every tyme that a man eteth or drinketh more than suffyseth to the sustenaunce of his body, in certein he dooth sinne. / And eek whan he speketh more than nedeth, it is sinne. Eke whan he herkneth nat benignely the compleint of the povre. / Eke whan he is in hele of body and wol nat faste, whan othere folk faste, withouten cause resonable. Eke whan he slepeth more than nedeth, or whan he comth by thilke enchesoun to late to chirche, or to othere werkes of charite. / Eke whan he useth his wyf, withouten sovereyn desyr of engendrure, to the honour of god, or for the entente to yelde to his wyf the dette of his body. / Eke whan he wol nat visite

the sike and the prisoner, if he may. Eke if he love wyf or child, or other worldly thing, more than resoun requyreth. Eke if he flatere or blandishe more than him oghte for any necessitee. / Eke if he amenuse or withdrawe the almesse of the povre. Eke if he apparailleth his mete more deliciously than nede is, or ete it to hastily by likerousnesse. / Eke if he tale vanitees at chirche or at goddes service, or that he be a talker of ydel wordes of folye or of vileinye; for he shal yelden acountes of it at the day of dome. / Eke whan he biheteth or assureth to do thinges that he may nat perfourne. Eke whan that he, by lightnesse or folie, misseyeth or scorneth his neighebore. / Eke whan he hath any wikked suspecion of thing, ther he ne woot of it no soothfastnesse. / Thise thinges and mo with-oute nombre been sinnes, as seith seint Augustin. /

Now shal men understonde, that al-be-it so that noon erthely man may eschue alle venial sinnes, yet may he refreyne him by the brenninge love that he hath to oure lord Iesu Crist, and by preyeres and confession and othere gode werkes, so that it shal but litel greve. / For, as seith seint Augustin: 'if a man love god in swiche manere, that al that evere he doth is in the love of god, and for the love of god verraily, for he brenneth in the love of god: / loke, how muche that a drope of water that falleth in a fourneys ful of fyr anoyeth or greveth, so muche anoyeth a venial sinne un-to a man that is parfit in the love of Iesu Crist.' / Men may also refreyne venial sinne by receyvinge worthily of the precious body of Iesu Crist; / by receyving eek of holy water; by almesdede; by general confession of *Confiteor* at masse and at complin; and by blessinge of bisshopes and of preestes, and by othere gode werkes. /

Explicit secunda pars Penitentie.

Sequitur de Septem Peccatis Mortalibus et eorum dependenciis circumstanciis et speciebus.

§ 23. Now is it bihovely thing to telle whiche been the deedly sinnes, this is to seyn, chieftaines of sinnes; alle they renne in o lees, but in diverse maneres. Now been they cleped chieftaines for-as-muche as they been chief, and springers of alle othere sinnes. / Of the roote of thise sevene sinnes thanne is Pryde, the general rote of alle harmes; for of this rote springen certein braunches, as Ire, Envye, Accidie or Slewthe, Avarice or Coveitise (to commune understondinge), Glotonye, and Lecherye. / And everich of thise chief sinnes hath hise braunches and hise twigges, as shal be declared in hir chapitres folwinge.

De Superbia.

§ 24. And thogh so be that no man can outrely telle the nombre of the twigges and of the harmes that cometh of Pryde, yet wol I shewe a partie of hem, as ye shul understonde. / Ther is Inobedience, Avauntinge, Ipocrisie, Despyt, Arrogance, Impudence, Swellinge of herte, Insolence, Elacion, Impacience, Strif, Contumacie, Presumpcion, Irreverence, Pertinacie, Veyne Glorie; and many another twig that I can nat declare. / Inobedient, is he that disobeyeth for despyt to the comandements of god and to hise sovereyns, and to his goostly fader. / Avauntour, is he that bosteth of the harm or of the bountee that he hath doon. / Ipocrite, is he that hydeth to shewe him swiche as he is, and sheweth him swiche as he noght is. / Despitous, is he that hath desdeyn of his neighebore, that is to seyn, of his evenecristene, or hath despyt to doon that him oghte to do. / Arrogant, is he that thinketh that he hath thilke bountees in him that he hath noght, or weneth that he sholde have hem by hise desertes; or elles he demeth that he

be that he nis nat. / Impudent, is he that for his pride hath no shame of hise sinnes. / Swellinge of herte, is whan a man reioyseth him of harm that he hath doon. / Insolent, is he that despyseth in his Iugement alle othere folk as to regard of his value, and of his conning, and of his speking, and of his bering. / Elacion, is whan he ne may neither suffre to have maister ne felawe. / Impacient, is he that wol nat been y-taught ne undernome of his vyce, and by stryf werreieth trouthe witingly, and deffendeth his folye. / *Contumax*, is he that thurgh his indignacion is agayns everich auctoritee or power of hem that been hise sovereyns. / Presumpcion, is whan a man undertaketh an empryse that him oghte nat do, or elles that he may nat do; and that is called Surquidrie. Irreverence, is whan men do nat honour there-as hem oghte to doon, and waiten to be reverenced. / Pertinacie, is whan man deffendeth his folye, and trusteth to muchel in his owene wit. / Veyne glorie, is for to have pompe and delyt in his temporel hynesse, and glorifie him in this worldly estaat. / Ianglinge, is whan men speken to muche biforn folk, and clappen as a mille, and taken no kepe what they seye. /

§ 25. And yet is ther a privee spece of Pryde, that waiteth first to be salewed er he wole salewe, al be he lasse worth than that other is, per-aventure; and eek he waiteth or desyreth to sitte, or elles to goon above him in the wey, or kisse pax, or been encensed, or goon to offring biforn his neighebore, / and swiche semblable thinges; agayns his duetee, per-aventure, but that he hath his herte and his entente in swich a proud desyr to be magnifyed and honoured biforn the peple. /

§ 26. Now been ther two maneres of Pryde; that oon of hem is withinne the herte of man, and that other is with-oute. / Of whiche soothly thise forseyde thinges, and mo than I have seyd, apertenen to pryde that is in the herte of man; and that othere speces of pryde been with-oute. / But natheles that oon of thise speces of pryde is signe of that other, right as the gaye leefsel atte taverne is signe of the wyn that is in the celer. / And this is in manye thinges: as in speche and countenaunce, and in outrageous array of clothing; / for certes, if ther ne hadde be no sinne in clothing, Crist wolde nat have noted and spoken of the clothing of thilke riche man in the gospel. / And, as seith Seint Gregorie, that precious clothing is coupable for the derthe of it, and for his softenesse, and for his strangenesse and degysinesse, and for the superfluitee, or for the inordinat scantnesse of it. / Allas! may men nat seen, as in oure dayes, the sinful costlewe array of clothinge, and namely in to muche superfluitee, or elles in to desordinat scantnesse? /

§ 27. As to the firste sinne, that is in superfluitee of clothinge, which that maketh it so dere, to harm of the peple; / nat only the cost of embroudinge, the degyse endentinge or barringe, oundinge, palinge, windinge, or bendinge, and semblable wast of clooth in vanitee; / but ther is also costlewe furringe in hir gounes, so muche pounsoninge of chisels to maken holes, so muche dagginge of sheres; / forth-with the superfluitee in lengthe of the forseide gounes, trailinge in the dong and in the myre, on horse and eek on fote, as wel of man as of womman, that al thilke trailing is verraily as in effect wasted, consumed, thredbare, and roten with donge, rather than it is yeven to the povre; to greet damage of the forseyde povre folk. / And that in sondry wyse: this is to seyn, that the more that clooth is wasted, the more it costeth to the peple for the scantnesse; / and forther-over, if so be that they wolde yeven swich pounsoned and dagged clothing to the povre folk, it is nat convenient to were for hir estaat, ne suffisant to bete hir necessitee, to kepe hem fro

the distemperance of the firmament. / Upon that other syde, to speken of the horrible disordinat scantnesse of clothing, as been thise cutted sloppes or hainselins, that thurgh hir shortnesse ne covere nat the shameful membres of man, to wikked entente. / Allas! somme of hem shewen the boce of hir shap, and the horrible swollen membres, that semeth lyk the maladie of hirnia, in the wrappinge of hir hoses; / and eek the buttokes of hem faren as it were the hindre part of a she-ape in the fulle of the mone. / And more-over, the wrecched swollen membres that they shewe thurgh the degysinge, in departinge of hir hoses in whyt and reed, semeth that half hir shameful privee membres weren flayn. / And if so be that they departen hire hoses in othere colours, as is whyt and blak, or whyt and blew, or blak and reed, and so forth; / thanne semeth it, as by variance of colour, that half the partie of hir privee membres were corrupt by the fyr of seint Antony, or by cancre, or by other swich meschaunce. / Of the hindre part of hir buttokes, it is ful horrible for to see. For certes, in that partie of hir body ther-as they purgen hir stinkinge ordure, / that foule partie shewe they to the peple proudly in despyt of honestetee, the which honestetee that Iesu Crist and hise freendes observede to shewen in hir lyve. / Now as of the outrageous array of wommen, god woot, that though the visages of somme of hem seme ful chaast and debonaire, yet notifie they in hir array of atyr likerousnesse and pryde. / I sey nat that honestetee in clothinge of man or womman is uncovenable, but certes the superfluitee or disordinat scantitee of clothinge is reprevable. / Also the sinne of aornement or of apparaille is in thinges that apertenen to rydinge, as in to manye delicat horses that been holden for delyt, that been so faire, fatte, and costlewe; / and also to many a vicious knave that is sustened by cause of hem; in to curious harneys, as in sadeles, in crouperes, peytrels, and brydles covered with precious clothing and riche, barres and plates of gold and of silver. / For which god seith by Zakarie the prophete, 'I wol confounde the ryderes of swiche horses.' / This folk taken litel reward of the rydinge of goddes sone of hevene, and of his harneys whan he rood up-on the asse, and ne hadde noon other harneys but the povre clothes of hise disciples; ne we ne rede nat that evere he rood on other beest. / I speke this for the sinne of superfluitee, and nat for reasonable honestetee, whan reson it requyreth. / And forther, certes pryde is greetly notified in holdinge of greet meinee, whan they be of litel profit or of right no profit. / And namely, whan that meinee is felonous and damageous to the peple, by hardinesse of heigh lordshipe or by wey of offices. / For certes, swiche lordes sellen thanne hir lordshipe to the devel of helle, whanne they sustenen the wikkednesse of hir meinee. / Or elles whan this folk of lowe degree, as thilke that holden hostelries, sustenen the thefte of hir hostilers, and that is in many manere of deceites. / Thilke manere of folk been the flyes that folwen the hony, or elles the houndes that folwen the careyne. Swiche forseyde folk stranglen spiritually hir lordshipes; / for which thus seith David the prophete, 'wikked deeth mote come up-on thilke lordshipes, and god yeve that they mote descenden in-to helle al doun; for in hir houses ben iniquitees and shrewednesses,' and nat god of hevene. / And certes, but-if they doon amendement, right as god yaf his benison to Laban by the service of Iacob, and to Pharao by the service of Ioseph, right so god wol yeve his malison to swiche lordshipes as sustenen the wikkednesse of hir servaunts, but-if they come to amendement. / Pryde of the table appereth eek ful ofte; for

certes, riche men been cleped to festes, and povre folk been put awey and rebuked. / Also in excesse of diverse metes and drinkes; and namely, swiche manere bake metes and dish-metes, brenninge of wilde fyr, and peynted and castelled with papir, and semblable wast; so that it is abusion for to thinke. / And eek in to greet preciousnesse of vessel and curiositee of minstralcie, by whiche a man is stired the more to delyces of luxurie, / if so be that he sette his herte the lasse up-on oure lord Iesu Crist, certein it is a sinne; and certeinly the delyces mighte been so grete in this caas, that man mighte lightly falle by hem in-to deedly sinne. / The especes that sourden of pryde, soothly whan they sourden of malice ymagined, avysed, and forncast, or elles of usage, been deedly synnes, it is no doute. / And whan they sourden by freletee unavysed sodeinly, and sodeinly withdrawen ayein, al been they grevouse sinnes, I gesse that they ne been nat deedly. / Now mighte men axe wher-of that Pryde sourdeth and springeth, and I seye: somtyme it springeth of the goodes of nature, and som-tyme of the goodes of fortune, and som-tyme of the goodes of grace. / Certes, the goodes of nature stonden outher in goodes of body or in goodes of soule. / Certes, goodes of body been hele of body, as strengthe, delivernesse, beautee, gentrye, franchise. / Goodes of nature of the soule been good wit, sharp understondynge, subtil engin, vertu naturel, good memorie. / Goodes of fortune been richesses, highe degrees of lordshipes, preisinges of the peple. / Goodes of grace been science, power to suffre spirituel travaille, benignitee, vertuous contemplacion, withstondinge of temptacion, and semblable thinges. / Of whiche forseyde goodes, certes it is a ful greet folye a man to pryden him in any of hem alle. / Now as for to speken of goodes of nature, god woot that som-tyme we han hem in nature as muche to oure damage as to oure profit. / As, for to speken of hele of body; certes it passeth ful lightly, and eek it is ful ofte encheson of the siknesse of oure soule; for god woot, the flesh is a ful greet enemy to the soule: and therfore, the more that the body is hool, the more be we in peril to falle. / Eke for to pryde him in his strengthe of body, it is an heigh folye; for certes, the flesh coveiteth agayn the spirit, and ay the more strong that the flesh is, the sorier may the soule be: / and, over al this, strengthe of body and worldly hardinesse causeth ful ofte many a man to peril and meschaunce. / Eek for to pryde him of his gentrye is ful greet folye; for ofte tyme the gentrye of the body binimeth the gentrye of the soule; and eek we ben alle of o fader and of o moder; and alle we been of o nature roten and corrupt, both riche and povre. / For sothe, o manere gentrye is for to preise, that appartailleth mannes corage with vertues and moralitees, and maketh him Cristes child. / For truste wel, that over what man sinne hath maistrie, he is a verray cherl to sinne. /

§ 28. Now been ther generale signes of gentilesse; as eschéwinge of vyce and ribaudye and servage of sinne, in word, in werk, and contenance; / and usinge vertu, curteisye, and clennessse, and to be liberal, that is to seyn, large by mesure; for thilke that passeth mesure is folye and sinne. / Another is, to remembre him of bountee that he of other folk hath receyved. / Another is, to be benigne to hise goode subgetis; wherfore, as seith Senek, 'ther is no-thing more covenable to a man of heigh estaat than debonairetee and pitee. / And therfore thise flyes that men clepeth bees, whan they maken hir king, they chesen oon that hath no prikke wherwith he may stinge.' / Another is, a man to have a noble herte and a

diligent, to attayne to heighe vertuouse thinges. / Now certes, a man to pryde him in the goodes of grace is eek an outrageous folye; for thilke yiftes of grace that sholde have turned him to goodnesse and to medicine, turneth him to venim and to confusion, as seith seint Gregorie. / Certes also, who-so prydeth him in the goodes of fortune, he is a ful greet fool; forsom-tyme is a man a greet lord by the morwe, that is a caitif and a wrecche er it be night: / and somtyme the richesse of a man is cause of his deeth; somtyme the delyces of a man is cause of the grevous maladye thurgh which he dyeth. / Certes, the commendacion of the peple is somtyme ful fals and ful brotel for to triste; this day they preyse, tomorwe they blame. / God woot, desyr to have commendacion of the peple hath caused deeth to many a bisy man. /

Remedium contra peccatum Superbie.

§ 29. Now sith that so is, that ye han understonde what is pryde, and whiche been the speces of it, and whennes pride sourdeth and springeth; / now shul ye understonde which is the remedie agayns the sinne of pryde, and that is, humilitee or mekenesse. / That is a vertu, thurgh which a man hath verray knoweleche of him-self, and holdeth of him-self no prys ne deyntee as in regard of hise desertes, consideringe evere hise freletee. / Now been ther three maneres of humilitee; as humiltee in herte, and another humilitee in his mouth; the thridde in hise werkes. / The humilitee in herte is in foure maneres: that oon is, whan a man holdeth him-self as noght worth biforn god of hevene. Another is whan he ne despyseth noon other man. / The thridde is, whan he rekketh nat thogh men holde him noght worth. The ferthe is, whan he nis nat sory of his humiliacion. / Also, the humilitee of mouth is in foure thinges: in attempree speche, and in humblesse of speche, and whan he biknoweth with his owene mouth that he is swich as him thinketh that he is in his herte. Another is, whan he preiseth the bountee of another man, and nothing ther-of amenuseth. / Humilitee eek in werkes is in foure maneres: the firste is, whan he putteth othere men biforn him. The seconde is, to chese the loweste place over-al. The thridde is, gladly to assente to good conseil. / The ferthe is, to stonde gladly to the award of hise sovereyns, or of him that is in hyer degree; certein, this is a greet werk of humilitee. /

Sequitur de Inuidia.

§ 30. After Pryde wol I speken of the foule sinne of Envye, which is, as by the word of the philosophre, sorwe of other mannes prosperitee; and after the word of seint Augustin, it is sorwe of other mannes wele, and Ioye of other mennes harm. / This foule sinne is platly agayns the holy goost. Al-be-it so that every sinne is agayns the holy goost, yet nathelees, for as muche as bountee aperteneth proprely to the holy goost, and Envye comth proprely of malice, therfore it is proprely agayn the bountee of the holy goost. / Now hath malice two speces, that is to seyn, hardnesse of herte in wikkednesse, or elles the flesh of man is so blind, that he considereth nat that he is in sinne, or rekketh nat that he is in sinne; which is the hardnesse of the devel. / That other spece of malice is, whan a man werreyeth trouthe, whan he woot that it is trouthe. And eek, whan he werreyeth the grace that god hath yeve to his neighebore; and al this is by Envye. / Certes, thanne is Envye the worste sinne that is. For soothly, alle othere sinnes been som-tyme only agayns o special vertu; / but certes, Envye is agayns alle vertues and agayns alle good-

nesses; for it is sory of alle the bountees of his neighebore; and in this manere it is divers from alle othere sinnes. / For wel unnethe is ther any sinne that it ne hath som delyt in itself, save only Envye, that evere hath in itself anguish and sorwe. / The speces of Envye been thise: ther is first, sorwe of other mannes goodnesse and of his prosperitee; and prosperitee is kindely matere of Ioye; thanne is Envye a sinne agayns kinde. / The seconde spece of Envye is Ioye of other mannes harm; and that is proprely lyk to the devel, that evere reioyseth him of mannes harm. / Of thise two speces comth bakbyting; and this sinne of bakbyting or detraccion hath certeine speces, as thus. Som man preiseth his neighebore by a wikke entente; / for he maketh alwey a wikked knotte atte laste ende. Alwey he maketh a 'but' atte laste ende, that is digne of more blame, than worth is al the preisinge. / The seconde spece is, that if a man be good and dooth or seith a thing to good entente, the bakbyter wol turne all thilke goodnesse up-sodoun to his shrewed entente. / The thridde is, to amenuse the bountee of his neighebore. / The fourthe spece of bakbyting is this; that if men speke goodnesse of a man, thanne wol the bakbyter seyn, 'parfey, swich a man is yet bet than he'; in dispreisinge of him that men preise. / The fifte spece is this; for to consente gladly and herkne gladly to the harm that men speke of other folk. This sinne is ful greet, and ay encreseth after the wikked entente of the bakbyter. / After bakbyting cometh grucching or murmuracion; and somtyme it springeth of inpacience agayns god, and somtyme agayns man. / Agayns god it is, whan a man gruccheth agayn the peynes of helle, or agayns poverte, or los of catel, or agayn reyn or tempest; or elles gruccheth that shrewes han prosperitee, or elles for that goode men han adversitee. / And alle thise thinges sholde men suffre paciently, for they comen by the rightful Iugement and ordinance of god. / Som-tyme comth grucching of avarice; as Iudas grucched agayns the Magdaleyne, whan she enoynte the heved of oure lord Iesu Crist with hir precious oynement. / This maner murmure is swich as whan man gruccheth of goodnesse that him-self dooth, or that other folk doon of hir owene catel. / Som-tyme comth murmure of pryde; as whan Simon the Pharisee grucched agayn the Magdaleyne, whan she approched to Iesu Crist, and weep at his feet for hir sinnes. / And somtyme grucching sourdeth of Envye; whan men discovereth a mannes harm that was privee, or bereth him on hond thing that is fals. / Murmure eek is ofte amonges servaunts, that grucchen whan hir sovereyns bidden hem doon leveful thinges; / and, for-as-muche as they dar nat openly withseye the comaundements of hir sovereyns, yet wol they seyn harm, and grucche, and murmure prively for verray despyt; / whiche wordes men clepen the develes *Pater-noster*, though so be that the devel ne hadde nevere *Pater-noster*, but that lewed folk yeven it swich a name. / Som tyme grucching comth of ire or prive hate, that norisseth rancour in herte, as afterward I shal declare. / Thanne cometh eek bitternesse of herte; thurgh which bitternesse every good dede of his neighebor semeth to him bitter and unsavory. / Thanne cometh discord, that unbindeth alle manere of frendshipe. Thanne comth scorninge, as whan a man seketh occasioun to anoyen his neighebor, al do he never so weel. / Thanne comth accusinge, as whan man seketh occasion to anoyen his neighebor, which that is lyk to the craft of the devel, that waiteth bothe

night and day to accusen us alle. / Thanne comth malignitee, thurgh which a man anoyeth his neighebor prively if he may; / and if he noght may, algate his wikked wil ne shal nat wante, as for to brennen his hous prively, or empoysone or sleen hise bestes, and semblable thinges. /

Remedium contra peccatum Inuidie.

§ 31. Now wol I speke of the remedie agayns this foule sinne of Envye. First, is the love of god principal, and loving of his neighebor as him-self; for soothly, that oon ne may nat been with-oute that other. / And truste wel, that in the name of thy neighebore thou shalt understonde the name of thy brother; for certes alle we have o fader fleshly, and o moder, that is to seyn, Adam and Eve; and eek o fader espirituel, and that is god of hevene. / Thy neighebore artow holden for to love, and wilne him alle goodnesse; and therfore seith god, 'love thy neighebore as thy-selve,' that is to seyn, to salvacion bothe of lyf and of soule. / And more-over, thou shalt love him in word, and in benigne amonestinge, and chastysinge; and conforten him in hise anoyes, and preye for him with al thyn herte. / And in dede thou shalt love him in swich wyse, that thou shalt doon to him in charitee as thou woldest that it were doon to thyn owene persone. / And therfore, thou ne shalt doon him no damage in wikked word, ne harm in his body, ne in his catel, ne in his soule, by entysing of wikked ensample. / Thou shalt nat desyren his wyf, ne none of hise thinges. Understond eek, that in the name of neighebor is comprehended his enemy. / Certes man shal loven his enemy by the comandement of god; and soothly thy frend shaltow love in God. / I seye, thyn enemy shaltow love for goddes sake, by his comandement. For if it were reson that a man sholde haten his enemy, for sothe god nolde nat receiven us to his love that been hise enemys. / Agayns three manere of wronges that his enemy dooth to hym, he shal doon three thinges, as thus. / Agayns hate and rancour of herte, he shal love him in herte. Agayns chyding and wikkede wordes, he shal preye for his enemy. And agayn the wikked dede of his enemy, he shal doon him bountee. / For Crist seith, 'loveth youre enemys, and preyeth for hem that speke yow harm; and eek for hem that yow chacen and pursewen, and doth bountee to hem that yow haten.' Lo, thus comaundeth us oure lord Iesu Crist, to do to oure enemys. / For soothly, nature dryveth us to loven oure freendes, and parfey, oure enemys han more nede to love than oure freendes; and they that more nede have, certes, to hem shal men doon goodnesse; / and certes, in thilke dede have we remembrance of the love of Iesu Crist, that deyde for hise enemys. / And in-as-muche as thilke love is the more grevous to perfourne, in-so-muche is the more gretter the merite; and therfore the lovinge of oure enemy hath confounded the venim of the devel. / For right as the devel is disconfited by humilitee, right so is he wounded to the deeth by love of oure enemy. / Certes, thanne is love the medicine that casteth out the venim of Envye fro mannes herte. / The speces of this pas shullen be more largely in hir chapitres folwinge declared. /

Sequitur de Ira.

§ 32. After Envye wol I discryven the sinne of Ire. For soothly, whoso hath envye upon his neighebor, anon he wole comunly finde him a matere of wratthe, in word or in dede, agayns him to whom he hath envye. / And as wel comth Ire of Pryde, as of Envye; for soothly, he that is proude or envious is lightly wrooth. /

§ 33. This sinne of Ire, after the

discryving of seint Augustin, is wikked wil to been avenged by word or by dede. / Ire, after the philosophre, is the fervent blood of man y-quiked in his herte, thurgh which he wole harm to him that he hateth. / For certes the herte of man, by eschaufinge and moevinge of his blood, wexeth so trouble, that he is out of alle Iugement of resoun. / But ye shal understonde that Ire is in two maneres; that oon of hem is good, and that other is wikked. / The gode Ire is by Ialousye of goodnesse, thurgh which a man is wrooth with wikkednesse and agayns wikkednesse; and therfore seith a wys man, that 'Ire is bet than pley.' / This Ire is with debonairetee, and it is wrooth withouten bitternesse; nat wrooth agayns the man, but wrooth with the misdede of the man; as seith the prophete David, *Irascimini et nolite peccare.* / Now understondeth, that wikked Ire is in two maneres, that is to seyn, sodeyn Ire or hastif Ire, withouten avisement and consentinge of resoun. / The meninge and the sens of this is, that the resoun of man ne consente nat to thilke sodeyn Ire; and thanne it is venial. / Another Ire is ful wikked, that comth of felonye of herte avysed and cast biforn; with wikked wil to do vengeance, and therto his resoun consenteth; and soothly this is deedly sinne. / This Ire is so displesant to god, that it troubleth his hous and chaceth the holy goost out of mannes soule, and wasteth and destroyeth the lyknesse of god, that is to seyn, the vertu that is in mannes soule; / and put in him the lyknesse of the devel, and binimeth the man fro god that is his rightful lord. / This Ire is a ful greet plesaunce to the devel; for it is the develes fourneys, that is eschaufed with the fyr of helle. / For certes, right so as fyr is more mighty to destroyen erthely thinges than any other element, right so Ire is mighty to destroyen alle spirituel thinges. / Loke how that fyr of smale gledes, that been almost dede under asshen, wollen quike agayn whan they been touched with brimstoon; right so Ire wol everemo quiken agayn, whan it is touched by the pryde that is covered in mannes herte. / For certes fyr ne may nat comen out of no-thing, but-if it were first in the same thing naturelly; as fyr is drawen out of flintes with steel. / And right so as pryde is ofte tyme matere of Ire, right so is rancour norice and keper of Ire. / Ther is a maner tree, as seith seint Isidre, that whan men maken fyr of thilke tree, and covere the coles of it with asshen, soothly the fyr of it wol lasten al a yeer or more. / And right so fareth it of rancour; whan it is ones conceyved in the hertes of som men, certein, it wol lasten peraventure from oon Estre-day unto another Estre-day, and more. / But certes, thilke man is ful fer fro the mercy of god al thilke while. /

§ 34. In this forseyde develes fourneys ther forgen three shrewes: Pryde, that ay bloweth and encreseth the fyr by chydinge and wikked wordes. / Thanne stant Envye, and holdeth the hote iren upon the herte of man with a peire of longe tonges of long rancour. / And thanne stant the sinne of contumelie or stryf and cheeste, and batereth and forgeth by vileyns reprevinges. / Certes, this cursed sinne anoyeth bothe to the man him-self and eek to his neighebor. For soothly, almost al the harm that any man dooth to his neighebore comth of wratthe. / For certes, outrageous wratthe doth al that evere the devel him comaundeth; for he ne spareth neither Crist, ne his swete mooder. / And in his outrageous anger and Ire, allas! allas! ful many oon at that tyme feleth in his herte ful wikkedly, bothe of Crist and of alle hise halwes. / Is nat this a cursed vice? Yis, certes. Allas! it binimeth from man his wit and his resoun, and al his debonaire lyf espirituel that sholde kepen his soule. / Certes, it binimeth eek goddes due

lordshipe, and that is mannes soule, and the love of hise neighebores. It stryveth eek alday agayn trouthe. It reveth him the quiete of his herte, and subverteth his soule. /

§ 35. Of Ire comen thise stinkinge engendrures: first hate, that is old wratthe; discord, thurgh which a man forsaketh his olde freend that he hath loved ful longe. / And thanne cometh werre, and every manere of wrong that man dooth to his neighebore, in body or in catel. / Of this cursed sinne of Ire cometh eek manslaughtre. And understonde wel, that homicyde, that is manslaughtre, is in dyverse wyse. Som manere of homicyde is spirituel, and som is bodily. / Spirituel manslaughtre is in six thinges. First, by hate; as seint Iohn seith, 'he that hateth his brother is homicyde.' / Homicyde is eek by bakbytinge; of whiche bakbyteres seith Salomon, that 'they han two swerdes with whiche they sleen hir neighebores.' For soothly, as wikke is to binime his good name as his lyf. / Homicyde is eek, in yevinge of wikked conseil by fraude; as for to yeven conseil to areysen wrongful custumes and taillages. / Of whiche seith Salomon, 'Leon rorynge and bere hongry been lyke to the cruel lordshipes,' in withholdinge or abregginge of the shepe (or the hyre), or of the wages of servaunts, or elles in usure or in withdrawinge of the almesse of povre folk. / For which the wyse man seith, 'fedeth him that almost dyeth for honger'; for soothly, but-if thou fede him, thou sleest him; and alle thise been deedly sinnes. / Bodily manslaughtre is, whan thow sleest him with thy tonge in other manere; as whan thou comandest to sleen a man, or elles yevest him conseil to sleen a man. / Manslaughtre in dede is in foure maneres. That oon is by lawe; right as a Iustice dampneth him that is coupable to the deeth. But lat the Iustice be war that he do it rightfully, and that he do it nat for delyt to spille blood, but for kepinge of rightwisenesse. / Another homicyde is, that is doon for necessitee, as whan o man sleeth another in his defendaunt, and that he ne may noon otherwise escape from his owene deeth. / But certeinly, if he may escape withouten manslaughtre of his adversarie, and sleeth him, he doth sinne, and he shal bere penance as for deedly sinne. / Eek if a man, by caas or aventure, shete an arwe or caste a stoon with which he sleeth a man, he is homicyde. / Eek if a womman by necligence overlyeth hir child in hir sleping, it is homicyde and deedly sinne. / Eek whan man destourbeth concepcion of a child, and maketh a womman outher bareyne by drinkinge venemouse herbes, thurgh which she may nat conceyve, or sleeth a child by drinkes wilfully, or elles putteth certeine material thinges in hir secree places to slee the child; / or elles doth unkindely sinne, by which man or womman shedeth hir nature in manere or in place ther-as a child may nat be conceived; or elles, if a womman have conceyved and hurt hir-self, and sleeth the child, yet is it homicyde. / What seye we eek of wommen that mordren hir children for drede of worldly shame? Certes, an horrible homicyde. / Homicyde is eek if a man approcheth to a womman by desir of lecherye, thurgh which the child is perissed, or elles smyteth a womman witingly, thurgh which she leseth hir child. Alle thise been homicydes and horrible deedly sinnes. / Yet comen ther of Ire manye mo sinnes, as wel in word as in thoght and in dede; as he that arretteth upon god, or blameth god, of thing of which he is him-self gilty; or despyseth god and alle hise halwes, as doon thise cursede hasardours in diverse contrees. / This cursed sinne doon they, whan they felen in hir hertes ful wikkedly of god and of hise halwes. / Also, whan they treten unreverently the sacrement of the

auter, thilke sinne is so greet, that unnethe may it been relesed, but that the mercy of god passeth alle hise werkes; it is so greet and he so benigne. / Thanne comth of Ire attry angre; whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrifte to forleten his sinne, / than wole he be angry and answeren hokerly and angrily, and deffenden or excusen his sinne by unstedefastnesse of his flesh; or elles he dide it for to holde companye with hise felawes, or elles, he seith, the fend entyced him; / or elles he dide it for his youthe, or elles his complexioun is so corageous, that he may nat forbere; or elles it is his destinee, as he seith, unto a certein age; or elles, he seith, it cometh him of gentillesse of hise auncestres; and semblable
585 thinges. / Alle this manere of folk so wrappen hem in hir sinnes, that they ne wol nat delivere hem-self. For soothly, no wight that excuseth him wilfully of his sinne may nat been delivered of his sinne, til that he mekely biknoweth his sinne. / After this, thanne cometh swering, that is expres agayn the comandement of god; and this bifalleth ofte of anger and of Ire. / God seith: 'thou shalt nat take the name of thy lord god in veyn or in ydel.' Also oure lord Iesu Crist seith by the word of seint Mathew: '*Nolite iurare omnino:* / ne wol ye nat swere in alle manere; neither by hevene, for it is goddes trone; ne by erthe, for it is the bench of his feet; ne by Ierusalem, for it is the citee of a greet king; ne by thyn heed, for thou mayst nat make an heer whyt ne blak. / But seyeth by youre word, "ye, ye," and "nay, nay"; and what that is more, it is
590 of yvel,' seith Crist. / For Cristes sake, ne swereth nat so sinfully, in dismembringe of Crist by soule, herte, bones, and body. For certes, it semeth that ye thinke that the cursede Iewes ne dismembred nat y-nough the preciouse persone of Crist but ye dismembre him more. / A ♁ if so be that the lawe compelle yow to swere, thanne rule yow after the lawe of god in youre swering, as seith Ieremye *quarto capitulo*, '*Iurabis in veritate, in iudicio et in iusticia:* thou shalt kepe three condicions; thou shalt swere in trouthe, in doom, and in rightwisnesse.' / This is to seyn, thou shalt swere sooth; for every lesinge is agayns Crist. For Crist is verray trouthe. And think wel this, that every greet swerere, nat compelled lawefully to swere, the wounde shal nat departe from his hous whyl he useth swich unleveful swering. / Thou shalt sweren eek in doom, whan thou art cestreyned by thy domesman to witnessen the trouthe. / Eek thou shalt nat swere for envye ne for favour, ne for mede, but for rightwisnesse; for declaracioun of it to the worship of god and helping of thyne evene-cristene. / And therfore, 595 every man that taketh goddes name in ydel, or falsly swereth with his mouth, or elles taketh on him the name of Crist, to be called a Cristene man, and liveth agayns Cristes livinge and his techinge, alle they taken goddes name in ydel. / Loke eek what seint Peter seith, *Actuum quarto capitulo*, '*Non est aliud nomen sub celo*,' &c. 'Ther nis noon other name,' seith seint Peter, 'under hevene, yeven to men, in which they mowe be saved;' that is to seyn, but the name of Iesu Crist. / Take kepe eek how that the precious name of Crist, as seith seint Paul *ad Philipenses secundo*, '*In nomine Iesu*, &c.: that in the name of Iesu every knee of hevenely creatures, or erthely, or of helle sholden bowe'; for it is so heigh and so worshipful, that the cursede feend in helle sholde tremblen to heren it y-nempned. / Thanne semeth it, that men that sweren so horribly by his blessed name, that they despyse him more boldely than dide the cursede Iewes, or elles the devel, that trembleth whan he hereth his name. /

§ 36. Now certes, sith that swering, but-if it be lawefully doon, is so

heighly deffended, muche worse is forswering falsly, and yet nedelees. /

§ 37. What seye we eek of hem that delyten hem in swering, and holden it a gentrie or a manly dede to swere grete othes? And what of hem that, of verray usage, ne cesse nat to swere grete othes, al be the cause nat worth a straw? Certes, this is horrible sinne. / Sweringe sodeynly with-oute avysement is eek a sinne. / But lat us go now to thilke horrible swering of adiuracioun and coniuriacioun, as doon thise false enchauntours or nigromanciens in bacins ful of water, or in a bright swerd, in a cercle, or in a fyr, or in a shulder-boon of a sheep. / I can nat seye but that they doon cursedly and damnably, agayns Crist and al the feith of holy chirche. /

§ 38. What seye we of hem that bileven in divynailes, as by flight or by noyse of briddes, or of bestes, or by sort, by geomancie, by dremes, by chirkinge of dores, or crakkinge of houses, by gnawynge of rattes, and swich manere wrecchednesse? / Certes, al this thing is deffended by god and by al holy chirche. For which they been acursed, til they come to amendement, that on swich filthe setten hir bileve. / Charmes for woundes or maladye of men, or of bestes, if they taken any effect, it may be peraventure that god suffreth it, for folk sholden yeve the more feith and reverence to his name. /

§ 39. Now wol I speken of lesinges, which generally is fals significacioun of word, in entente to deceyven his evene-cristene. / Som lesinge is of which ther comth noon avantage to no wight: and som lesinge turneth to the ese or profit of o man, and to disese and damage of another man. / Another lesinge is for to saven his lyf or his catel. Another lesinge comth of delyt for to lye, in which delyt they wol forge a long tale, and peynten it with alle circumstaunces, where al the ground of the tale is fals. / Som lesinge comth, for he wole sustene his word; and som lesinge comth of recchelesnesse, with-outen avysement; and semblable thinges. /

§ 40. Lat us now touche the vyce of flateringe, which ne comth nat gladly but for drede or for coveitise. / Flaterye is generally wrongful preisinge. Flatereres been the develes norices, that norissen hise children with milk of losengerie. / For sothe, Salomon seith, that 'flaterie is wors than detraccioun,' For som-tyme detraccion maketh an hautein man be the more humble, for he dredeth detraccion; but certes flaterye, that maketh a man to enhauncen his herte and his countenaunce. / Flatereres been the develes enchauntours; for they make a man to wene of him-self be lyk that he nis nat lyk. / They been lyk to Iudas that bitraysed [god; and thise flatereres bitraysen] a man to sellen him to his enemy, that is, to the devel. / Flatereres been the develes chapelleyns, that singen evere *Placebo*. / I rekene flaterye in the vyces of Ire; for ofte tyme, if o man be wrooth with another, thanne wol he flatere som wight to sustene him in his querele. /

§ 41. Speke we now of swich cursinge as comth of irous herte. Malisoun generally may be seyd every maner power or harm. Swich cursinge bireveth man fro the regne of god, as seith seint Paul. / And ofte tyme swich cursinge wrongfully retorneth agayn to him that curseth, as a brid that retorneth agayn to his owene nest. / And over alle thing men oghten eschewe to cursen hir children, and yeven to the devel hir engendrure, as ferforth as in hem is; certes, it is greet peril and greet sinne. /

§ 42. Lat us thanne speken of chydinge and reproche, whiche been ful grete woundes in mannes herte; for they unsowen the semes of frendshipe in mannes herte. / For certes, unnethes may a man pleynly been accorded with him that hath him openly

revyled and repreved in disclaundre. This is a ful grisly sinne, as Crist seith in the gospel. / And tak kepe now, that he that repreveth his neighebor, outher he repreveth him by som harm of peyne that he hath on his body, as 'meesel,' 'croked harlot,' or by som sinne that he dooth. / Now if he repreve him by harm of peyne, thanne turneth the repreve to Iesu Crist; for peyne is sent by the rightwys sonde of god, and by his suffrance, be it meselrie, or maheym, or maladye. / And if he repreve him uncharitably of sinne, as, 'thou holour,' 'thou dronkelewe harlot,' and so forth; thanne aperteneth that to the reioysinge of the devel, that evere hath Ioye that men doon sinne. / And certes, chydinge may nat come but out of a vileyns herte. For after the habundance of the herte speketh the mouth ful ofte. / And ye shul understonde that loke, by any wey, whan any man shal chastyse another, that he be war from chydinge or reprevinge. For trewely, but he be war, he may ful lightly quiken the fyr of angre and of wratthe, which that he sholde quenche, and per-aventure sleeth him which that he mighte chastyse with benignitee. / For as seith Salomon, 'the amiable tonge is the tree of lyf,' that is to seyn, of lyf espirituel: and sothly, a deslavee tonge sleeth the spirites of him that repreveth, and eek of him that is repreved. / Lo, what seith seint Augustin: 'ther is no-thing so lyk the develes child as he that ofte chydeth.' Seint Paul seith eek: 'I, servant of god, bihove nat to chyde.' / And how that chydinge be a vileyns thing bitwixe alle manere folk, yet it is certes most uncovenable bitwixe a man and his wyf; for there is nevere reste. And therfore seith Salomon, 'an hous that is uncovered and droppinge, and a chydinge wyf, been lyke.' / A man that is in a droppinge hous in many places, though he eschewe the droppinge o place, it droppeth on him in another place; so fareth it by a chydinge wyf. But she chyde him in o place, she wol chyde him in another. / And therfore, 'bettre is a morsel of breed with Ioye than an hous ful of delyces, with chydinge,' seith Salomon. / Seint Paul seith: 'O ye wommen, be ye subgetes to youre housbondes as bihoveth in god; and ye men, loveth youre wyves.' *Ad Colossenses, tertio.* /

§ 43. Afterward speke we of scorninge, which is a wikked sinne; and namely, whan he scorneth a man for hise gode werkes. / For certes, swiche scorneres faren lyk the foule tode, that may nat endure to smelle the sote savour of the vyne whanne it florissheth. / Thise scorneres been parting felawes with the devel; for they han Ioye whan the devel winneth, and sorwe whan he leseth. / They been adversaries of Iesu Crist; for they haten that he loveth, that is to seyn, salvacion of soule. /

§ 44. Speke we now of wikked conseil; for he that wikked conseil yeveth is a traytour. For he deceyveth him that trusteth in him, *ut Achitofel ad Absolonem.* But natheless, yet is his wikked conseil first agayn him-self. / For, as seith the wyse man, every fals livinge hath this propertee in him-self, that he that wole anoye another man, he anoyeth him-self. / And men shul understonde, that man shal nat taken his conseil of fals folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk, ne of folk that loven specially to muchel hir owene profit, ne to muche worldly folk, namely, in conseilinge of soules. /

§ 45. Now comth the sinne of hem that sowen and maken discord amonges folk, which is a sinne that Crist hateth outrely; and no wonder is. For he deyde for to make concord. / And more shame do they to Crist, than dide they that him crucifyede; for god loveth bettre, that frendshipe be amonges folk, than he dide his owene body, the which that he yaf for unitee. Therfore been they lykned to the devel, that evere been aboute to maken discord. /

§ 46. Now comth the sinne of double tonge; swiche as speken faire biforn folk, and wikkedly bihinde; or elles they maken semblant as though they speke of good entencioun, or elles in game and pley, and yet they speke of wikked entente. /

§ 47. Now comth biwreying of conseil, thurgh which a man is defamed; certes, unnethe may he restore the damage. /

Now comth manace, that is an open folye; for he that ofte manaceth, he threteth more than he may perfourne ful ofte tyme. /

Now cometh ydel wordes, that is with-outen profit of him that speketh tho wordes, and eek of him that herkneth tho wordes. Or elles ydel wordes been tho that been nedelees, or with-outen entente of naturel profit. / And al-be-it that ydel wordes been som tyme venial sinne, yet sholde men douten hem; for we shul yeve rekeninge of hem bifore god. /

Now comth Ianglinge, that may nat been withoute sinne. And, as seith Salomon, 'it is a sinne of apert folye.' / And therfore a philosophre seyde, whan men axed him how that men sholde plese the peple; and he answerde, 'do many gode werkes, and spek fewe Iangles.' /

After this comth the sinne of Iaperes, that been the develes apes; for they maken folk to laughe at hir Iaperie, as folk doon at the gaudes of an ape. Swiche Iaperes deffendeth seint Paul. / Loke how that vertuouse wordes and holy conforten hem that travaillen in the service of Crist; right so conforten the vileyns wordes and knakkes of Iaperis hem that travaillen in the service of the devel. / Thise been the sinnes that comen of the tonge, that comen of Ire and of othere sinnes mo. /

Sequitur remedium contra peccatum Ire.

§ 48. The remedye agayns Ire is a vertu that men clepen Mansuetude, that is Debonairetee; and eek another vertu, that men callen Pacience or Suffrance. /

§ 49. Debonairetee withdraweth and refreyneth the stiringes and the moevynges of mannes corage in his herte, in swich manere that they ne skippe nat out by angre ne by Ire. / Suffrance suffreth swetely alle the anoyaunces and the wronges that men doon to man outward. / Seint Ierome seith thus of debonairetee, that 'it doth noon harm to no wight, ne seith; ne for noon harm that men doon or seyn, he ne eschaufeth nat agayns his resoun.' / This vertu somtyme comth of nature; for, as seith the philosophre, 'a man is a quik thing, by nature debonaire and tretable to goodnesse; but whan debonairetee is enformed of grace, thanne is it the more worth.' /

§ 50. Pacience, that is another remedye agayns Ire, is a vertu that suffreth swetely every mannes goodnesse, and is nat wrooth for noon harm that is doon to him. / The philosophre seith, that 'pacience is thilke vertu that suffreth debonairely alle the outrages of adversitee and every wikked word.' / This vertu maketh a man lyk to god, and maketh him goddes owene dere child, as seith Crist. This vertu disconfiteth thyn enemy. And therfore seith the wyse man, 'if thou wolt venquisse thyn enemy, lerne to suffre.' / And thou shalt understonde, that man suffreth foure manere of grevances in outward thinges, agayns the whiche foure he moot have foure manere of paciences. /

§ 51. The firste grevance is of wikkede wordes; thilke suffrede Iesu Crist with-outen grucching, ful paciently, whan the Iewes despysed and repreved him ful ofte. / Suffre thou therfore paciently; for the wyse man seith: 'if thou stryve with a fool, though the fool be wrooth or though he laughe, algate thou shalt have no reste.' / That other grevance outward is to have damage of thy catel. Ther-agayns suffred Crist ful paciently,

whan he was despoyled of al that he hadde in this lyf, and that nas but hise clothes. / The thridde grevance is a man to have harm in his body. That suffred Crist ful pacyently in al his passioun. / The fourthe grevance is in outrageous labour in werkes. Wherfore I seye, that folk that maken hir servants to travaillen to grevously, or out of tyme, as on halydayes, soothly they do greet sinne. / Heer-agayns suffred Crist ful paciently, and taughte us pacience, whan he bar up-on his blissed shulder the croys, up-on which he sholde suffren despitous deeth. / Heer may men lerne to be pacient; for certes, noght only Cristen men been pacient for love of Iesu Crist, and for guerdoun of the blisful lyf that is perdurable; but certes, the olde payens, that nevere were Cristene, commendeden and useden the vertu of pacience. /

§ 52. A philosophre up-on a tyme, that wolde have beten his disciple for his grete trespas, for which he was greetly amoeved, and broghte a yerde to scourge the child; / and whan this child saugh the yerde, he seyde to his maister, 'what thenke ye to do?' 'I wol bete thee,' quod the maister, 'for thy correccion.' / 'For sothe,' quod the child, 'ye oghten first correcte youre-self, that han lost al youre pacience for the gilt of a child.' / 'For sothe,' quod the maister al wepinge, 'thou seyst sooth; have thou the yerde, my dere sone, and correcte me for myn inpacience.' / Of Pacience comth Obedience, thurgh which a man is obedient to Crist and to alle hem to whiche he oghte to been obedient in Crist. / And understond wel that obedience is perfit, whan that a man doth gladly and hastily, with good herte entierly, al that he sholde do. / Obedience generally, is to perfourne the doctrine of god and of his sovereyns, to whiche him oghte to ben obeisaunt in alle rightwysnesse. /

Sequitur de Accidia.

§ 53. After the sinnes of Envie and of Ire, now wol I speken of the sinne of Accidie. For Envye blindeth the herte of a man, and Ire troubleth a man; and Accidie maketh him hevy, thoghtful, and wrawe. / Envye and Ire maken bitternesse in herte; which bitternesse is moder of Accidie, and binimeth him the love of alle goodnesse. Thanne is Accidie the anguissh of a trouble herte; and seint Augustin seith: 'it is anoy of goodnesse and Ioye of harm.' / Certes, this is a dampnable sinne; for it doth wrong to Iesu Crist, in-as-muche as it binimeth the service that men oghte doon to Crist with alle diligence, as seith Salomon. / But Accidie dooth no swich diligence; he dooth alle thing with anoy, and with wrawnesse, slaknesse, and excusacioun, and with ydelnesse and unlust; for which the book seith: 'acursed be he that doth the service of god negligently.' / Thanne is Accidie enemy to everich estaat of man; for certes, the estaat of man is in three maneres. / Outher it is thestaat of innocence, as was thestaat of Adam biforn that he fil into sinne; in which estaat he was holden to wirche, as in heryinge and adouringe of god. / Another estaat is the estaat of sinful men, in which estaat men been holden to laboure in preyinge to god for amendement of hir sinnes, and that he wole graunte hem to arysen out of hir sinnes. / Another estaat is thestaat of grace, in which estaat he is holden to werkes of penitence; and certes, to alle thise thinges is Accidie enemy and contrarie. For he loveth no bisinesse at al. / Now certes, this foule sinne Accidie is eek a ful greet enemy to the lyflode of the body; for it ne hath no purveaunce agayn temporel necessitee; for it forsleweth and forsluggeth, and destroyeth alle goodes temporeles by reccheleesnesse. /

§ 54. The fourthe thinge is, that Accidie is lyk to hem that been in the

peyne of helle, by-cause of hir slouthe and of hir hevinesse; for they that been dampned been so bounde, that they ne may neither wel do ne wel thinke. / Of Accidie comth first, that a man is anoyed and encombred for to doon any goodnesse, and maketh that god hath abhominacion of swich Accidie, as seith seint Iohan. /

§ 55. Now comth Slouthe, that wol nat suffre noon hardnesse ne no penaunce. For soothly, Slouthe is so tendre, and so delicat, as seith Salomon, that he wol nat suffre noon hardnesse ne penaunce, and therfore he shendeth al that he dooth. / Agayns this roten-herted sinne of Accidie and Slouthe sholde men exercise hem-self to doon gode werkes, and manly and vertuously cacchen corage wel to doon; thinkinge that oure lord Iesu Crist quyteth every good dede, be it never so lyte. / Usage of labour is a greet thing; for it maketh, as seith seint Bernard, the laborer to have stronge armes and harde sinwes; and Slouthe maketh hem feble and tendre. / Thanne comth drede to biginne to werke any gode werkes; for certes, he that is enclyned to sinne, him thinketh it is so greet an empryse for to undertake to doon werkes of goodnesse, / and casteth in his herte that the circumstaunces of goodnesse been so grevouse and so chargeaunt for to suffre, that he dar nat undertake to do werkes of goodnesse, as seith seint Gregorie. /

§ 56. Now comth wanhope, that is despeir of the mercy of god, that comth somtyme of to muche outrageous sorwe, and somtyme of to muche drede; imagininge that he hath doon so muche sinne, that it wol nat availlen him, though he wolde repenten him and forsake sinne: / thurgh which despeir or drede he abaundoneth al his herte to every maner sinne, as seith seint Augustin. / Which dampnable sinne, if that it continue un-to his ende, it is cleped sinning in the holy gost. / This horrible sinne is so perilous, that he that is despeired, ther nis no felonye ne no sinne that he douteth for to do; as shewed wel by Iudas. / Certes, aboven alle sinnes thanne is this sinne most displesant to Crist, and most adversarie. / Soothly, he that despeireth him is lyk the coward champioun recreant, that seith creant withoute nede. Allas! allas! nedeles is he recreant and nedeles despeired. / Certes, the mercy of god is evere redy to every penitent, and is aboven alle hise werkes. / Allas! can nat a man bithinke him on the gospel of seint Luk, 15., where-as Crist seith that 'as wel shal ther be Ioye in hevene upon a sinful man that doth penitence, as up-on nynete and nyne rightful men that neden no penitence?' / Loke forther, in the same gospel, the Ioye and the feste of the gode man that hadde lost his sone, whan his sone with repentaunce was retourned to his fader. / Can they nat remembren hem eek, that, as seith seint Luk *xxiii^o capitulo*, how that the theef that was hanged bisyde Iesu Crist, seyde: 'Lord, remembre of me, whan thou comest in-to thy regne?' / 'For sothe,' seyde Crist, 'I seye to thee, to-day shaltow been with me in Paradys.' / Certes, ther is noon so horrible sinne of man, that it ne may, in his lyf, be destroyed by penitence, thurgh vertu of the passion and of the deeth of Crist. / Allas! what nedeth man thanne to been despeired, sith that his mercy so redy is and large? Axe and have. / Thanne cometh Sompnolence, that is, sluggy slombringe, which maketh a man be hevy and dul, in body and in soule; and this sinne comth of Slouthe. / And certes, the tyme that, by wey of resoun, men sholde nat slepe, that is by the morwe; but-if ther were cause resonable. / For soothly, the morwe-tyde is most covenable, a man to seye his preyeres, and for to thinken on god, and for to honoure god, and to yeven almesse to the povre, that first cometh in the name of Crist. / Lo! what seith Salomon: 'who-so

wolde by the morwe awaken and seke me, he shal finde.' / Thanne cometh Necligence, or recchelesnesse, that rekketh of no-thing. And how that ignoraunce be moder of alle harm, certes, Necligence is the norice. / Necligence ne doth no fors, whan he shal doon a thing, whether he do it weel or baddely. /

§ 57. Of the remedie of thise two sinnes, as seith the wyse man, that 'he that dredeth god, he spareth nat to doon that him oghte doon.' / And he that loveth god, he wol doon diligence to plese god by his werkes, and abaundone him-self, with al his might, wel for to doon. / Thanne comth ydelnesse, that is the yate of alle harmes. An ydel man is lyk to a place that hath no walles; the develes may entre on every syde and sheten at him at discovert, by temptacion on every syde. / This ydelnesse is the thurrok of alle wikked and vileyns thoghtes, and of alle Iangles, trufles, and of alle ordure. / Certes, the hevene is yeven to hem that wol labouren, and nat to ydel folk. Eek David seith: that 'they ne been nat in the labour of men, ne they shul nat been whipped with men,' that is to seyn, in purgatorie. / Certes, thanne semeth it, they shul be tormented with the devel in helle, but-if they doon penitence. /

§ 58. Thanne comth the sinne that men clepen *Tarditas*, as whan a man is to latrede or taryinge, er he wole turne to god; and certes, that is a greet folye. He is lyk to him that falleth in the dich, and wol nat aryse. / And this vyce comth of a fals hope, that he thinketh that he shal live longe; but that hope faileth ful ofte. /

§ 59. Thanne comth Lachesse; that is he, that whan he biginneth any good werk, anon he shal forleten it and stinten; as doon they that han any wight to governe, and ne taken of him na-more kepe, anon as they finden any contrarie or any anoy. / Thise been the newe shepherdes, that leten hir sheep witingly go renne to the wolf that is in the breres, or do no fors of hir owene governaunce. / Of this comth poverte and destrecciouu, bothe of spirituel and temporel thinges. Thanne comth a manere coldnesse, that freseth al the herte of man. / Thanne comth undevocioun, thurgh which a man is so blent, as seith Seint Bernard, and hath swiche langour in soule, that he may neither rede ne singe in holy chirche, ne here ne thinke of no devocioun, ne travaille with hise handes in no good werk, that it nis him unsavory and al apalled. / Thanne wexeth he slow and slombry, and sone wol be wrooth, and sone is enclyned to hate and to envye. / Thanne comth the sinne of worldly sorwe, swich as is cleped *tristicia*, that sleeth man, as seint Paul seith. / For certes, swich sorwe werketh to the deeth of the soule and of the body also; for ther-of comth, that a man is anoyed of his owene lyf. / Wherfore swich sorwe shorteth ful ofte the lyf of a man, er that his tyme be come by wey of kinde. /

Remedium contra peccatum Accidie.

§ 60. Agayns this horrible sinne of Accidie, and the branches of the same, ther is a vertu that is called *Fortitudo* or Strengthe; that is, an affecciouu thurgh which a man despyseth anoyous thinges. / This vertu is so mighty and so vigorous, that it dar withstonde mightily and wysely kepen him-self fro perils that been wikked, and wrastle agayn the assautes of the devel. / For it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule, right as Accidie abateth it and maketh it feble. For this *Fortitudo* may endure by long suffraunce the travailles that been covenable. /

§ 61. This vertu hath manye speces; and the firste is cleped Magnanimitee, that is to seyn, greet corage. For certes, ther bihoveth greet corage agains Accidie, lest that it ne swolwe the soule by the sinne of sorwe, or destroye it by wanhope. / This vertu

maketh folk to undertake harde thinges and grevouse thinges, by hir owene wil, wysely and resonably. / And for as muchel as the devel fighteth agayns a man more by queyntise and by sleighte than by strengthe, therfore men shal withstonden him by wit and by resoun and by discrecioun. / Thanne arn ther the vertues of feith, and hope in god and in hise seintes, to acheve and acomplice the gode werkes in the whiche he purposeth fermely to continue. / Thanne comth seuretee or sikernesse; and that is, whan a man ne douteth no travaille in tyme cominge of the gode werkes that a man hath bigonne. / Thanne comth Magnificence, that is to seyn, whan a man dooth and perfourneth grete werkes of goodnesse that he hath bigonne; and that is the ende why that men sholde do gode werkes; for in the acomplissinge of grete goode werkes lyth the grete guerdoun. / Thanne is ther Constaunce, that is, stablenesse of corage; and this sholde been in herte by stedefast feith, and in mouth, and in beringe, and in chere and in dede. / Eke ther been mo speciale remedies agains Accidie, in diverse werkes, and in consideracioun of the peynes of helle, and of the Ioyes of hevene, and in trust of the grace of the holy goost, that wole yeve him might to perfourne his gode entente. /

Sequitur de Auaricia.

§ 62. After Accidie wol I speke of Avarice and of Coveitise, of which sinne seith Paule, that 'the rote of alle harmes is Coveitise': *Ad Timotheum, sexto capitulo.* / For soothly, whan the herte of a man is confounded in it-self and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the confort of god, thanne seketh he an ydel solas of worldly thinges. /

§ 63. Avarice, after the descripcion of seint Augustin, is likerousnesse in herte to have erthely thinges. / Som other folk seyn, that Avarice is, for to purchacen manye erthely thinges, and no thing yeve to hem that han nede. / And understond, that Avarice ne stant nat only in lond ne catel, but somtyme in science and in glorie, and in every manere of outrageous thing is Avarice and Coveitise. / And the difference bitwixe Avarice and Coveitise is this. Coveitise is for to coveite swiche thinges as thou hast nat; and Avarice is for to withholde and kepe swiche thinges as thou hast, withoute rightful nede. / Soothly, this Avarice is a sinne that is ful dampnable; for al holy writ curseth it, and speketh agayns that vyce; for it dooth wrong to Iesu Crist. / For it bireveth him the love that men to him owen, and turneth it bakward agayns alle resoun; / and maketh that the avaricious man hath more hope in his catel than in Iesu Crist, and dooth more observance in kepinge of his tresor than he dooth to service of Iesu Crist. / And therfore seith seint Paul *ad Ephesios, quinto,* that 'an avaricious man is in the thraldom of ydolatrie.' /

§ 64. What difference is bitwixe an ydolastre and an avaricious man, but that an ydolastre, per aventure, ne hath but o mawmet or two, and the avaricious man hath manye? For certes, every florin in his cofre is his mawmet. / And certes, the sinne of Mawmetrye is the firste thing that God deffended in the ten comaundments, as bereth witnesse *Exodi, capitulo xx°*: / 'Thou shalt have no false goddes bifore me, ne thou shalt make to thee no grave thing.' Thus is an avaricious man, that loveth his tresor biforn god, an ydolastre, / thurgh this cursed sinne of Avarice. Of Coveitise comen thise harde lordshipes, thurgh whiche men been distreyned by tailages, custumes, and cariages, more than hir duetee or resoun is. And eek they taken of hir bonde-men amerciments, whiche mighten more resonably ben cleped extorcions than amerciments. / Of whiche amerciments and raunsoninge of bondemen, somme lordes stywardes

seyn, that it is rightful; for-as-muche as a cherl hath no temporel thing that it ne is his lordes, as they seyn. / But certes, thise lordshipes doon wrong, that bireven hir bonde-folk thinges that they nevere yave hem: *Augustinus de Civitate, libro nono.* / Sooth is, that the condicioun of thraldom and the firste cause of thraldom is for sinne; *Genesis, quinto.* /

§ 65. Thus may ye seen that the gilt disserveth thraldom, but nat nature. / Wherfore thise lordes ne sholde nat muche glorifyen hem in hir lordshipes, siththat by naturel condicion they been nat lordes of thralles; but for that thraldom comth first by the desert of sinne. / And forther-over, ther-as the lawe seith, that temporel godes of bonde-folk been the godes of hir lordshipes, ye, that is for to understonde, the godes of the emperour, to deffenden hem in hir right, but nat for to robben hem ne reven hem. / And therfore seith Seneca: 'thy prudence sholde live benignely with thy thralles.' / Thilke that thou clepest thy thralles been goddes peple; for humble folk been Cristes freendes; they been contubernial with the lord. /

§ 66. Think eek, that of swich seed as cherles springeth, of swich seed springen lordes. As wel may the cherl be saved as the lord. / The same deeth that taketh the cherl, swich deeth taketh the lord. Wherfore I rede, do right so with thy cherl, as thou woldest that thy lord dide with thee, if thou were in his plyt. / Every sinful man is a cherl to sinne. I rede thee, certes, that thou, lord, werke in swiche wyse with thy cherles, that they rather love thee than drede. / I woot wel ther is degree above degree, as reson is; and skile it is, that men do hir devoir ther-as it is due; but certes, extorcions and despit of youre underlinges is dampnable. /

§ 67. And forther-over understond wel, that thise conquerours or tiraunts maken ful ofte thralles of hem, that been born of as royal blood as been they that hem conqueren. / This name of thraldom was nevere erst couth, til that Noe seyde, that his sone Canaan sholde be thral to hise bretheren for his sinne. / What seye we thanne of hem that pilen and doon extorcions to holy chirche? Certes, the swerd, that men yeven first to a knight whan he is newe dubbed, signifyeth that he sholde deffenden holy chirche, and nat robben it ne pilen it; and who so dooth, is traitour to Crist. / And, as seith seint Augustin, 'they been the develes wolves, that stranglen the sheep of Iesu Crist'; and doon worse than wolves. / For soothly, whan the wolf hath ful his wombe, he stinteth to strangle sheep. But soothly, the pilours and destroyours of goddes holy chirche ne do nat so; for they ne stinte nevere to pile. / Now, as I have seyd, sith so is that sinne was first cause of thraldom, thanne is it thus; that thilke tyme that al this world was in sinne, thanne was al this world in thraldom and subieccioun. / But certes, sith the tyme of grace cam, god ordeyned that som folk sholde be more heigh in estaat and in degree, and som folk more lowe, and that everich sholde be served in his estaat and in his degree. / And therfore, in somme contrees ther they byen thralles, whan they han turned hem to the feith, they maken hir thralles free out of thraldom. And therfore, certes, the lord oweth to his man that the man oweth to his lord. / The Pope calleth him-self servant of the servaunts of god; but for-as-muche as the estaat of holy chirche ne mighte nat han be, ne the commune profit mighte nat han be kept, ne pees and reste in erthe, but-if god hadde ordeyned that som men hadde hyer degree and som men lower: / therfore was sovereyntee ordeyned to kepe and mayntene and deffenden hir underlinges or hir subgets in resoun, as ferforth as it lyth in hir power; and nat to destroyen hem ne confounde. /

Wherfore I seye, that thilke lordes that been lyk wolves, that devouren the possessiouns or the catel of povre folk wrongfully, with-outen mercy or mesure, / they shul receyven, by the same mesure that they han mesured to povre folk, the mercy of Iesu Crist, but-if it be amended. / Now comth deceite bitwixe marchant and marchant. And thow shalt understonde, that marchandyse is in two maneres; that oon is bodily, and that other is goostly. That oon is honeste and leveful, and that other is deshoneste and unleveful. / Of thilke bodily marchandyse, that is leveful and honeste, is this; that, there-as god hath ordeyned that a regne or a contree is suffisaunt to him-self, thanne is it honeste and leveful, that of habundaunce of this contree, that men helpe another contree that is more nedy. / And therfore, ther mote been marchants to bringen fro that o contree to that other hire marchandyses. / That other marchandise, that men haunten with fraude and trecherie and deceite, with lesinges and false othes, is cursed and dampnable. / Espirituel marchandyse is proprely Symonye, that is, ententif desyr to byen thing espirituel, that is, thing that aperteneth to the seintuarie of god and to cure of the soule. / This desyr, if so be that a man do his diligence to parfournen it, al-be-it that his desyr ne take noon effect, yet is it to him a deedly sinne; and if he be ordred, he is irreguler. / Certes, Symonye is cleped of Symon Magus, that wolde han boght, for temporel catel, the yifte that god hadde yeven, by the holy goost, to seint Peter and to the apostles. / And therfore understond, that bothe he that selleth and he that byeth thinges espirituels, been cleped Symonials; be it by catel, be it by procuringe, or by fleshly preyere of hise freendes, fleshly freendes, or espirituel freendes. / Fleshly, in two maneres; as by kinrede or othere freendes. Soothly, if they praye for him that is nat worthy and able, it is Symonye if he take the benefice; and if he be worthy and able, ther nis noon. / That other manere is, whan a man or womman preyen for folk to avauncen hem, only for wikked fleshly affeccioun that they have un-to the persone; and that is foul Symonye. / But certes, in service, for which men yeven thinges espirituels un-to hir servants, it moot been understonde that the service moot been honeste, and elles nat; and eek that it be with-outen bargayninge, and that the persone be able. / For, as seith Seint Damasie, 'alle the sinnes of the world, at regard of this sinne, arn as thing of noght'; for it is the gretteste sinne that may be, after the sinne of Lucifer and Antecrist. / For, by this sinne, god forleseth the chirche, and the soule that he boghte with his precious blood, by hem that yeven chirches to hem that been nat digne. / For they putten in theves, that stelen the soules of Iesu Christ and destroyen his patrimoine. / By swiche undigne preestes and curates han lewed men the lasse reverence of the sacraments of holy chirche; and swiche yeveres of chirches putten out the children of Crist, and putten in-to the chirche the develes owene sone. / They sellen the soules that lambes sholde kepen to the wolf that strangleth hem. And therfore shul they nevere han part of the pasture of lambes, that is, the blisse of hevene. / Now comth hasardrye with hise apurtenaunces, as tables and rafles; of which comth deceite, false othes, chydinges, and alle ravines, blasphemynge and reneyinge of god, and hate of hise neighebores, wast of godes, misspendinge of tyme, and somtyme manslaughtre. / Certes, hasardours ne mowe nat been with-outen greet sinne whyles they haunte that craft. / Of avarice comen eek lesinges, thefte, fals witnesse, and false othes. And ye shul understonde that thise been grete sinnes, and expres agayn the comaundements of god, as I have seyd. / Fals witnesse is in word and

eek in dede. In word, as for to bireve thy neighebores goode name by thy fals witnessing, or bireven him his catel or his heritage by thy fals witnessing; whan thou, for ire or for mede, or for envye, berest fals witnesse, or accusest him or excusest him by thy fals witnesse, or elles excusest thy-self falsly. / Ware yow, questemongeres and notaries! Certes, for fals witnessing was Susanna in ful gret sorwe and peyne, and many another mo. / The sinne of thefte is eek expres agayns goddes heste, and that in two maneres, corporel and espirituel. / Corporel, as for to take thy neighebores catel agayn his wil, be it by force or by sleighte, be it by met or by mesure. / By steling eek of false enditements upon him, and in borwinge of thy neighebores catel, in entente nevere to payen it agayn, and semblable thinges. / Espirituel thefte is Sacrilege, that is to seyn, hurtinge of holy thinges, or of thinges sacred to Crist, in two maneres; by reson of the holy place, as chirches or chirche hawes, / for which every vileyns sinne that men doon in swiche places may be cleped sacrilege, or every violence in the semblable places. Also, they that withdrawen falsly the rightes that longen to holy chirche. / And pleynly and generally, sacrilege is to reven holy thing fro holy place, or unholy thing out of holy place, or holy thing out of unholy place. /

Relevacio contra peccatum Avaricie.

§ 68. Now shul ye understonde, that the relevinge of Avarice is misericorde, and pitee largely taken. And men mighten axe, why that misericorde and pitee is relevinge of Avarice? / Certes, the avaricious man sheweth no pitee ne misericorde to the nedeful man; for he delyteth him in the kepinge of his tresor, and nat in the rescowinge ne relevinge of his evene-cristene. And therfore speke I first of misericorde. / Thanne is misericorde, as seith the philosophre, a vertu, by which the corage of man is stired by the misese of him that is misesed. / Up-on which misericorde folweth pitee, in parfourninge of charitable werkes of misericorde. / And certes, thise thinges moeven a man to misericorde of Iesu Crist, that he yaf him-self for oure gilt, and suffred deeth for misericorde, and forgaf us oure originale sinnes; / and therby relessed us fro the peynes of helle, and amenused the peynes of purgatorie by penitence, and yeveth grace wel to do, and atte laste the blisse of hevene. / The speces of misericorde been, as for to lene and for to yeve and to foryeven and relesse, and for to han pitee in herte, and compassioun of the meschief of his evene-cristene, and eek to chastyse there as nede is. / Another manere of remedie agayns Avarice is resonable largesse; but soothly, here bihoveth the consideracioun of the grace of Iesu Crist, and of hise temporel goodes, and eek of the godes perdurables that Crist yaf to us; / and to han remembrance of the deeth that he shal receyve, he noot whanne, where, ne how; and eek that he shal forgon al that he hath, save only that he hath despended in gode werkes. /

§ 69. But for-as-muche as som folk been unmesurable, men oghten eschue fool-largesse, that men clepen wast. / Certes, he that is fool-large ne yeveth nat his catel, but he leseth his catel. Soothly, what thing that he yeveth for veyne glorie, as to minstrals and to folk, for to beren his renoun in the world, he hath sinne ther-of and noon almesse. / Certes, he leseth foule his good, that ne seketh with the yifte of his good nothing but sinne. / He is lyk to an hors that seketh rather to drinken drovy or trouble water than for to drinken water of the clere welle. / And for-as-muchel as they yeven ther as they sholde nat yeven, to hem aperteneth thilke malisoun that Crist shal yeven at the day of dome to hem that shullen been dampned. /

Sequitur de Gula.

§ 70. After Avarice comth Glotonye, which is expres eek agayn the comandement of god. Glotonye is unmesurable appetyt to ete or to drinke, or elles to doon y-nogh to the unmesurable appetyt and desordeynee coveityse to eten or to drinke. / This sinne corrumped al this world, as is wel shewed in the sinne of Adam and of Eve. Loke eek, what seith seint Paul of Glotonye. / 'Manye,' seith seint Paul, 'goon, of whiche I have ofte seyd to yow, and now I seye it wepinge, that they been the enemys of the croys of Crist; of whiche the ende is deeth, and of whiche hir wombe is hir god, and hir glorie in confusioun of hem that so saveren erthely thinges.' / He that is usaunt to this sinne of Glotonye, he ne may no sinne withstonde. He moot been in servage of alle vyces, for it is the develes hord ther he hydeth him and resteth. / This sinne hath manye speces. The firste is dronkenesse, that is the horrible sepulture of mannes resoun; and therfore, whan a man is dronken, he hath lost his resoun; and this is deedly sinne. / But soothly, whan that a man is nat wont to strong drinke, and peraventure ne knoweth nat the strengthe of the drinke, or hath feblesse in his heed, or hath travailed, thurgh which he drinketh the more, al be he sodeynly caught with drinke, it is no deedly sinne, but venial. / The seconde spece of Glotonye is, that the spirit of a man wexeth al trouble; for dronkenesse bireveth him the discrecioun of his wit. / The thridde spece of Glotonye is, whan a man devoureth his mete, and hath no rightful manere of etinge. / The fourthe is whan, thurgh the grete habundaunce of his mete, the humours in his body been destempred. / The fifthe is, foryetelnesse by to muchel drinkinge; for which somtyme a man foryeteth er the morwe what he dide at even or on the night biforn. /

§ 71. In other manere been distinct the speces of Glotonye, after seint Gregorie. The firste is, for to ete biforn tyme to ete. The seconde is, whan a man get him to delicat mete or drinke. / The thridde is, whan men taken to muche over mesure. The fourthe is curiositee, with greet entente to maken and apparaillen his mete. The fifthe is, for to eten to gredily. / Thise been the fyve fingres of the develes hand, by whiche he draweth folk to sinne. /

Remedium contra peccatum Gule.

§ 72. Agayns Glotonye is the remedie Abstinence, as seith Galien; but that holde I nat meritorie, if he do it only for the hele of his body. Seint Augustin wole, that Abstinence be doon for vertu and with pacience. / Abstinence, he seith, is litel worth, but-if a man have good wil ther-to, and but it be enforced by pacience and by charitee, and that men doon it for godes sake, and in hope to have the blisse of hevene. /

§ 73. The felawes of Abstinence been Attemperaunce, that holdeth the mene in alle thinges: eek Shame, that eschueth alle deshonestee: Suffisance, that seketh no riche metes ne drinkes, ne dooth no fors of to outrageous apparailinge of mete. / Mesure also, that restreyneth by resoun the desiavee appetyt of etinge: Sobrenesse also, that restreyneth the outrage of drinke: / Sparinge also, that restreyneth the delicat ese to sitte longe at his mete and softely; wherfore som folk stonden of hir owene wil, to eten at the lasse leyser. /

Sequitur de Luxuria.

§ 74. After Glotonye, thanne comth Lecherie; for thise two sinnes been so ny cosins, that ofte tyme they wol nat departe. / God woot, this sinne is ful displesaunt thing to god; for he seyde himself, 'do no lecherie.' And therfore he putte

grete peynes agayns this sinne in the olde lawe. / If womman thral were taken in this sinne, she sholde be beten with staves to the deeth. And if she were a gentil womman, she sholde be slayn with stones. And if she were a bisshoppes doghter, she sholde been brent, by goddes comandement. / Forther over, by the sinne of Lecherie, god dreynte al the world at the diluge. And after that, he brente fyve citees with thonderleyt, and sank hem in-to helle. /

§ 75. Now lat us speke thanne of thilke stinkinge sinne of Lecherie that men clepe Avoutrie of wedded folk, that is to seyn, if that oon of hem be wedded, or elles bothe. / Seint John seith, that avoutiers shullen been in helle in a stank brenninge of fyr and of brimston; in fyr, for the lecherie; in brimston, for the stink of hir ordure. / Certes, the brekinge of this sacrement is an horrible thing; it was maked of god him-self in paradys, and confermed by Iesu Crist, as witnesseth seint Mathew in the gospel: 'A man shal lete fader and moder, and taken him to his wyf, and they shullen be two in o flesh.' / This sacrement bitokneth the knittinge togidre of Crist and of holy chirche. / And nat only that god forbad avoutrie in dede, but eek he comanded that thou sholdest nat coveite thy neighebores wyf. / In this heeste, seith seint Augustin, is forboden alle manere coveitise to doon lecherie. Lo what seith seint Mathew in the gospel: that 'who-so seeth a womman to coveitise of his lust, he hath doon lecherie with hir in his herte.' / Here may ye seen that nat only the dede of this sinne is forboden, but eek the desyr to doon that sinne. / This cursed sinne anoyeth grevousliche hem that it haunten. And first, to hir soule; for he oblygeth it to sinne and to peyne of deeth that is perdurable. / Un-to the body anoyeth it grevously also, for it dreyeth him, and wasteth, and shent him, and of his blood he maketh sacrifyce to the feend of helle; it wasteth his catel and his substaunce. / And certes, if it be a foul thing, a man to waste his catel on wommen, yet is it a fouler thing whan that, for swich ordure, wommen dispenden up-on men hir catel and substaunce. / This sinne, as seith the prophete, bireveth man and womman hir gode fame, and al hir honour; and it is ful pleasaunt to the devel; for ther-by winneth he the moste partie of this world. / And right as a marchant delyteth him most in chaffare that he hath most avantage of, right so delyteth the feend in this ordure. /

§ 76. This is that other hand of the devel, with fyve fingres, to cacche the peple to his vileinye. / The firste finger is the fool lookinge of the fool womman and of the fool man, that sleeth, right as the basilicok sleeth folk by the venim of his sighte; for the coveitise of eyen folweth the coveitise of the herte. / The seconde finger is the vileyns touchinge in wikkede manere; and ther-fore seith Salomon, that who-so toucheth and handleth a womman, he fareth lyk him that handleth the scorpioun that stingeth and sodeynly sleeth thurgh his enveniminge; as who-so toucheth warm pich, it shent hise fingres. / The thridde, is foule wordes, that fareth lyk fyr, that right anon brenneth the herte. / The fourthe finger is the kissinge; and trewely he were a greet fool that wolde kisse the mouth of a brenninge ovene or of a fourneys. / And more fooles been they that kissen in vileinye; for that mouth is the mouth of helle: and namely, thise olde dotardes holours, yet wol they kisse, though they may nat do, and smatre hem. / Certes, they been lyk to houndes; for an hound, whan he comth by the roser or by othere [busshes], though he may nat pisse, yet wole he heve up his leg and make a contenaunce to pisse. / And for that many man weneth that he may nat sinne, for no likerousnesse that he doth with his wyf; certes, that

opinion is fals. God woot, a man may sleen him-self with his owene knyf, and make him-selven dronken of his owene tonne. / Certes, be it wyf, be it child, or any worldly thing that he loveth biforn god, it is his maumet, and he is an ydolastre. / Man sholde loven his wyf by discrecioun, paciently and atemprely; and thanne is she as though it were his suster. / The fifthe finger of the develes hand is the stinkinge dede of Lecherie. / Certes, the fyve fingres of Glotonie the feend put in the wombe of a man, and with hise fyve fyngres of Lecherie he gripeth him by the reynes, for to throwen him in-to the fourneys of helle; / ther-as they shul han the fyr and the wormes that evere shul lasten, and wepinge and wailinge, sharp hunger and thurst, and grimnesse of develes that shullen al to-trede hem, with-outen respit and with-outen ende. / Of Lecherie, as I seyde, sourden diverse speces; as fornicacioun, that is bitwixe man and woman that been nat maried; and this is deedly sinne and agayns nature. / Al that is enemy and destruccioun to nature is agayns nature. / Parfay, the resoun of a man telleth eek him wel that it is deedly sinne, for-as-muche as god forbad Lecherie. And seint Paul yeveth hem the regne, that nis dewe to no wight but to hem that doon deedly sinne. / Another sinne of Lecherie is to bireve a mayden of hir maydenhede; for he that so dooth, certes, he casteth a mayden out of the hyeste degree that is in this present lyf, / and bireveth hir thilke precious fruit that the book clepeth 'the hundred fruit.' I ne can seye it noon other weyes in English, but in Latin it highte *Centesimus fructus*. / Certes, he that so dooth is cause of manye damages and vileinyes, mo than any man can rekene; right as he som-tyme is cause of alle damages that bestes don in the feeld, that breketh the hegge or the closure; thurgh which he destroyeth that may nat been restored. / For certes, na-more may maydenhede be restored than an arm that is smiten fro the body may retourne agayn to wexe. / She may have mercy, this woot I wel, if she do penitence; but nevere shal it be that she nas corrupt. / And al-be-it so that I have spoken somwhat of Avoutrie, it is good to shewen mo perils that longen to Avoutrie, for to eschue that foule sinne. / Avoutrie in Latin is for to seyn, approchinge of other mannes bed, thurgh which tho that whylom weren o flessh abaundone hir bodyes to othere persones. / Of this sinne, as seith the wyse man, folwen manye harmes. First, brekinge of feith; and certes, in feith is the keye of Cristendom. / And whan that feith is broken and lorn, soothly Cristendom stant veyn and with-outen fruit. / This sinne is eek a thefte; for thefte generally is for to reve a wight his thing agayns his wille. / Certes, this is the fouleste thefte that may be, whan a womman steleth hir body from hir housbonde and yeveth it to hire holour to defoulen hir; and steleth hir soule fro Crist, and yeveth it to the devel. / This is a fouler thefte, than for to breke a chirche and stele the chalice; for thise Avoutiers breken the temple of god spiritually, and stelen the vessel of grace, that is, the body and the soule, for which Crist shal destroyen hem, as seith Seint Paul. / Soothly of this thefte douted gretly Ioseph, whan that his lordes wyf preyed him of vileinye, whan he seyde, 'Io, my lady, how my lord hath take to me under my warde al that he hath in this world; ne no-thing of hise thinges is out of my power, but only ye that been his wyf. / And how sholde I thanne do this wikkednesse, and sinne so horribly agayns god, and agayns my lord? God it forbede.' Allas! al to litel is swich trouthe now y-founde! / The thridde harm is the filthe thurgh which they breken the comandement of god, and defoulen the auctour of matrimoine,

that is Crist. / For certes, in-so-muche as the sacrement of mariage is so noble and so digne, so muche is it gretter sinne for to breken it; for god made mariage in paradys, in the estaat of Innocence, to multiplye man-kinde to the service of god. / And therfore is the brekinge ther-of more grevous. Of which brekinge comen false heires ofte tyme, that wrongfully occupyen folkes heritages. And therfore wol Crist putte hem out of the regne of hevene, that is heritage to gode folk. / Of this brekinge comth eek ofte tyme, that folk unwar wedden or sinnen with hir owene kinrede; and namely thilke harlottes that haunten bordels of thise fool wommen, that mowe be lykned to a commune gonge, where-as men purgen hir ordure. / What seye we eek of putours that liven by the horrible sinne of putrie, and constreyne wommen to yelden to hem a certeyn rente of hir bodily puterie, ye, somtyme of his owene wyf or his child; as doon this baudes? Certes, thise been cursede sinnes. / Understond eek, that avoutrie is set gladly in the ten comandements bitwixe thefte and manslaughtre; for it is the gretteste thefte that may be; for it is thefte of body and of soule. / And it is lyk to homicyde; for it kerveth a-two and breketh a-two hem that first were maked o flesh, and therfore, by the olde lawe of god, they sholde be slayn. / But nathelees, by the lawe of Iesu Crist, that is lawe of pitee, whan he seyde to the womman that was founden in avoutrie, and sholde han been slayn with stones, after the wil of the Iewes, as was hir lawe: 'Go,' quod Iesu Crist, 'and have na-more wil to sinne'; or, 'wille na-more to do sinne.' / Soothly, the vengeaunce of avoutrie is awarded to the peynes of helle, but-if so be that it be destourbed by penitence. / Yet been ther mo speces of this cursed sinne; as whan that oon of hem is religious, or elles bothe; or of folk that been entred in-to ordre, as subdekne or dekne, or preest, or hospitaliers. And evere the hyer that he is in ordre, the gretter is the sinne. / The thinges that gretly agreggen hir sinne is the brekinge of hir avow of chastitee, whan they receyved the ordre. / And forther-over, sooth is, that holy ordre is chief of al the tresorie of god, and his especial signe and mark of chastitee; to shewe that they been ioyned to chastitee, which that is most precious lyf that is. / And thise ordred folk been specially tytled to god, and of the special meynee of god; for which, whan they doon deedly sinne, they been the special traytours of god and of his peple; for they liven of the peple, to preye for the peple, and whyle they been suche traitours, hir preyers availen nat to the peple. / Preestes been aungeles, as by the dignitee of hir misterye; but for sothe, seint Paul seith, that 'Sathanas transformeth him in an aungel of light.' / Soothly, the preest that haunteth deedly sinne, he may be lykned to the aungel of derknesse transformed in the aungel of light; he semeth aungel of light, but for sothe he is aungel of derknesse. / Swiche preestes been the sones of Helie, as sheweth in the book of Kinges, that they weren the sones of Belial, that is, the devel. / Belial is to seyn 'with-outen Iuge'; and so faren they; hem thinketh they been free, and han no Iuge, na-more than hath a free bole that taketh which cow that him lyketh in the toun. / So faren they by wommen. For right as a free bole is y-nough for al a toun, right so is a wikked preest corrupcioun y-nough for al a parisshe, or for al a contree. / Thise preestes, as seith the book, ne conne nat the misterie of preesthode to the peple, ne god ne knowe they nat; they ne helde hem nat apayd, as seith the book, of soden flesh that was to hem offred, but they toke by force the flesh that is rawe. / Certes, so thise shrewes ne holden hem nat

apayed of rosted flesh and sode flesh, with which the peple fedden hem in greet reverence, but they wole have raw flesh of folkes wyves and hir doghtres./ And certes, thise wommen that consenten to hir harlotrie doon greet wrong to Crist and to holy chirche and alle halwes, and to alle soules; for they bireven alle thise him that sholde worshipe Crist and holy chirche, and preye for cristene soules./ And therfore han swiche preestes, and hir lemmanes eek that consenten to hir lecherie, the malisoun of al the court cristen, til they come to amendement./ The thridde spece of avoutrie is som-tyme bitwixe a man and his wyf; and that is whan they take no reward in hir assemblinge, but only to hire fleshly delyt, as seith seint Ierome; / and ne rekken of no-thing but that they been assembled; by-cause that they been maried, al is good y-nough, as thinketh to hem./ But in swich folk hath the devel power, as seyde the aungel Raphael to Thobie; for in hir assemblinge they putten Iesu Crist out of hir herte, and yeven hem-self to alle ordure./ The fourthe spece is, the assemblee of hem that been of hire kinrede, or of hem that been of oon affinitee, or elles with hem with whiche hir fadres or hir kinrede han deled in the sinne of lecherie; this sinne maketh hem lyk to houndes, that taken no kepe to kinrede./ And certes, parentele is in two maneres, outher goostly or fleshly; goostly, as for to delen with hise godsibbes./ For right so as he that engendreth a child is his fleshly fader, right so is his godfader his fader espirituel. For which a womman may in no lasse sinne assemblen with hir godsib than with hir owene fleshly brother./ The fifthe spece is thilke abhominable sinne, of which that no man unnethe oghte speke ne wryte, nathelees it is openly reherced in holy writ./ This cursednesse doon men and wommen in diverse entente and in diverse manere; but though that holy writ speke of horrible sinne, certes, holy writ may not been defouled, na-more than the sonne that shyneth on the mixen./ Another sinne aperteneth to lecherie, that comth in slepinge; and this sinne cometh ofte to hem that been maydenes, and eek to hem that been corrupt; and this sinne men clepen pollucioun, that comth in foure maneres./ Somtyme, of languissinge of body; for the humours been to ranke and habundaunt in the body of man. Somtyme of infermetee; for the feblesse of the vertu retentif, as phisik maketh mencioun. Som-tyme, for surfeet of mete and drinke./ And somtyme of vileyns thoghtes, that been enclosed in mannes minde whan he goth to slepe; which may nat been with-oute sinne. For which men moste kepen hem wysely, or elles may men sinnen ful grevously./

Remedium contra peccatum Luxurie.

§ 77. Now comth the remedie agayns Lecherie, and that is, generally, Chastitee and Continence, that restreyneth alle the desordeynee moevinges that comen of fleshly talentes./ And evere the gretter merite shal he han, that most restreyneth the wikkede eschaufinges of the ordure of this sinne. And this is in two maneres, that is to seyn, chastitee in mariage, and chastitee of widwehode./ Now shaltow understonde, that matrimoine is leefful assemblinge of man and of womman, that receyven by vertu of the sacrement the bond, thurgh which they may nat be departed in al hir lyf, that is to seyn, whyl that they liven bothe./ This, as seith the book, is a ful greet sacrement. God maked it, as I have seyd, in paradys, and wolde him-self be born in mariage./ And for to halwen mariage, he was at a weddinge, where-as he turned water in-to wyn; which was the firste miracle that he wroghte in erthe biforn hise disciples./ Trewe effect of mariage

clenseth fornicacioun and replenisseth holy chirche of good linage; for that is the ende of mariage; and it chaungeth deedly sinne in-to venial sinne bitwixe hem that been y-wedded, and maketh the hertes al oon of hem that been y-wedded, as wel as the bodies. / This is verray mariage, that was established by god er that sinne bigan, whan naturel lawe was in his right point in paradys; an dit was ordyned that o man sholde have but o woman, and o womman but o man, as seith Seint Augustin, by manye resouns. /

§ 78. First, for mariage is figured bitwixe Crist and holy chirche. And that other is, for a man is heved of a womman; algate, by ordinaunce it sholde be so. / For if a womman had mo men than oon, thanne sholde she have mo hevedes than oon, and that were an horrible thing biforn god; and eek a womman ne mighte nat plese to many folk at ones. And also ther ne sholde nevere be pees ne reste amonges hem; for everich wolde axen his owene thing. / And forther-over, no man ne sholde knowe his owene engendrure, ne who sholde have his heritage; and the womman sholde been the lasse biloved, fro the time that she were conioynt to many men. /

§ 79. Now comth, how that a man sholde bere him with his wyf; and namely, in two thinges, that is to seyn in suffraunce and reverence, as shewed Crist whan he made first womman. / For he ne made hir nat of the heved of Adam, for she sholde nat clayme to greet lordshipe. / For ther-as the womman hath the maistrie, she maketh to muche desray; ther neden none ensamples of this. The experience of day by day oghte suffyse. / Also certes, god ne made nat womman of the foot of Adam, for she ne sholde nat been holden to lowe; for she can nat pacintly suffre: but god made womman of the rib of Adam, for womman sholde be felawe un-to man. / Man sholde bere him to his wyf in feith, in trouthe, and in love, as seith seint Paul: that 'a man sholde loven his wyf as Crist loved holy chirche, that loved it so wel that he deyde for it.' So sholde a man for his wyf, if it were nede. /

§ 80. Now how that a womman sholde be subget to hir housbonde, that telleth seint Peter. First, in obedience. / And eek, as seith the decree, a womman that is a wyf, as longe as she is a wyf, she hath noon auctoritee to swere ne bere witnesse with-oute leve of hir housbonde, that is hir lord; algate, he sholde be so by resoun. / She sholde eek serven him in alle honestee, and been attempree of hir array. I wot wel that they sholde setten hir entente to plesen hir housbondes, but nat by hir queyntise of array. / Seint Ierome seith, that wyves that been apparailled in silk and in precious purpre ne mowe nat clothen hem in Iesu Crist. What seith seint Iohn eek in this matere? / Seint Gregorie eek seith, that no wight seketh precious array but only for veyne glorie, to been honoured the more biforn the peple. / It is a greet folye, a womman to have a fair array outward and in hir-self be foul inward. / A wyf sholde eek be mesurable in lokinge and in beringe and in laughinge, and discreet in alle hir wordes and hir dedes. / And aboven alle worldly thing she sholde loven hir housbonde with al hir herte, and to him be trewe of hir body; / so sholde an housbonde eek be to his wyf. For sith that al the body is the housbondes, so sholde hir herte been, or elles ther is bitwixe hem two, as in that, no parfit mariage. / Thanne shal men understonde that for three thinges a man and his wyf fleshly mowen assemble. The firste is in entente of engendrure of children to the service of god, for certes that is the cause fynal of matrimoine. / Another cause is, to yelden everich of hem to other the dette of hir bodies, for neither of hem hath power over his owene body. The thridde is, for to eschewe lecherye

and vileinye. The ferthe is for sothe deedly sinne. / As to the firste, it is meritorie; the seconde also; for, as seith the decree, that she hath merite of chastitee that yeldeth to hir housbonde the dette of hir body, ye, though it be agayn hir lykinge and the lust of hir herte. / The thridde manere is venial sinne, and trewely scarsly may ther any of thise be with-oute venial sinne, for the corrupcion and for the delyt. / The fourthe manere is for to understonde, if they assemble only for amorous love and for noon of the forseyde causes, but for to accomplice thilke brenninge delyt, they rekke nevere how ofte, sothly it is deedly sinne; and yet, with sorwe, somme folk wol peynen hem more to doon than to hir appetyt suffyseth. /

§ 81. The seconde manere of chastitee is for to been a clene widewe, and eschue the embracinges of man, and desyren the embracinge of Iesu Crist. / Thise been tho that han been wyves and han forgoon hir housbondes, and eek wommen that han doon lecherie and been releeved by Penitence. / And certes, if that a wyf coude kepen hir al chaast by licence of hir housbonde, so that she yeve nevere noon occasion that he agilte, it were to hire a greet merite. / Thise manere wommen that observen chastitee moste be clene in herte as well as in body and in thoght, and mesurable in clothinge and in contenaunce; and been abstinent in etinge and drinkinge, in spekinge, and in dede. They been the vessel or the boyste of the blissed Magdelene, that fulfilleth holy chirche of good odour. / The thridde manere of chastitee is virginitee, and it bihoveth that she be holy in herte and clene of body; thanne is she spouse to Iesu Crist, and she is the lyf of angeles. / She is the preisinge of this world, and she is as thise martirs in egalitee; she hath in hir that tonge may nat telle ne herte thinke. / Virginitee baar oure lord Iesu Crist, and virgine was him-selve. /

§ 82. Another remedie agayns Lecherie is, specially to withdrawen swiche thinges as yeve occasion to thilke vileinye; as ese, etinge and drinkinge; for certes, whan the pot boyleth strongly, the beste remedie is to withdrawe the fyr. / Slepinge longe in greet quiete is eek a greet norice to Lecherie. /

§ 83. Another remedie agayns Lecherie is, that a man or a woman eschue the companye of hem by whiche he douteth to be tempted; for al-be-it so that the dede is withstonden, yet is ther greet temptacioun. / Soothly a whyt wal, al-though it ne brenne noght fully by stikinge of a candele, yet is the wal blak of the leyt. / Ful ofte tyme I rede, that no man truste in his owene perfeccioun, but he be stronger than Sampson, and holier than David, and wyser than Salomon. /

§ 84. Now after that I have declared yow, as I can, the sevene deedly sinnes, and somme of hir braunches and hir remedies, soothly, if I coude, I wolde telle yow the ten comandements. / But so heigh a doctrine I lete to divines. Nathelees, I hope to god they been touched in this tretice, everich of hem alle. /

De Confessione.

§ 85. Now for-as-muche as the second partie of Penitence stant in Confessioun of mouth, as I bigan in the firste chapitre, I seye, seint Augustin seith: / sinne is every word and every dede, and al that men coveiten agayn the lawe of Iesu Crist; and this is for to sinne in herte, in mouth, and in dede, by thy fyve wittes, that been sighte, heringe, smellinge, tastinge or savouringe, and felinge. / Now is it good to understonde that that agreggeth muchel every sinne. / Thou shalt considere what thou art that doost the sinne, whether thou be male or femele, yong or old, gentil or thral, free or servant, hool or syk, wedded or sengle, ordred or unordred,

wys or fool, clerk or seculer; / if she be of thy kinrede, bodily or goostly, or noon; if any of thy kinrede have sinned with hir or noon, and manye mo thinges. /

§ 86. Another circumstaunce is this; whether it be doon in fornicacioun, or in avoutrie, or noon; incest, or noon; mayden, or noon; in manere of homicyde, or noon; horrible grete sinnes, or smale; and how longe thou hast continued in sinne. / The thridde circumstaunce is the place ther thou hast do sinne; whether in other mennes hous or in thyn owene; in feeld or in chirche, or in chirche-hawe; in chirche dedicat, or noon. / For if the chirche be halwed, and man or womman spille his kinde inwith that place by wey of sinne, or by wikked temptacion, the chirche is entredited til it be reconciled by the bishop; / and the preest that dide swich a vileinye, to terme of al his lyf, he sholde na-more singe masse; and if he dide, he sholde doon deedly sinne at every tyme that he so songe masse. / The fourthe circumstaunce is, by whiche mediatours or by whiche messagers, as for entycement, or for consentement to bere companye with felaweshipe; for many a wrecche, for to bere companye, wil go to the devel of helle. / Wher-fore they that eggen or consenten to the sinne been parteners of the sinne, and of the dampnacioun of the sinner. / The fifthe circumstaunce is, how manye tymes that he hath sinned, if it be in his minde, and how ofte that he hath falle. / For he that ofte falleth in sinne, he despiseth the mercy of god, and encreesseth his sinne, and is unkinde to Crist; and he wexeth the more feble to withstonde sinne, and sinneth the more lightly, / and the latter aryseth, and is the more eschew for to shryven him, namely, to him that is his confessour. / For which that folk, whan they falle agayn in hir olde folies, outher they forleten hir olde confessours al outrely, or elles they departen hir shrift in diverse places; but soothly, swich departed shrift deserveth no mercy of god of hise sinnes. / The sixte circumstaunce is, why that a man sinneth, as by whiche temptacioun; and if him-self procure thilke temptacioun, or by the excytinge of other folk; or if he sinne with a womman by force, or by hir owene assent; / or if the womman, maugree hir heed, hath been afforced, or noon; this shal she telle; for coveitise, or for poverte, and if it was hir procuringe, or noon; and swiche manere harneys. / The seventhe circumstaunce is, in what manere he hath doon his sinne, or how that she hath suffred that folk han doon to hir. / And the same shal the man telle pleynly, with alle circumstaunces; and whether he hath sinned with comune bordel-wommen, or noon; / or doon his sinne in holy tymes, or noon; in fasting-tymes, or noon; or biforn his shrifte, or after his latter shrifte; / and hath, per-aventure, broken ther-fore his penance enioyned; by whos help and whos conseil; by sorcerie or craft; al moste be told. / Alle thise thinges, after that they been grete or smale, engreggen the conscience of man. And eek the preest that is thy Iuge, may the bettre been avysed of his Iugement in yevinge of thy penaunce, and that is after thy contricioun. / For understond wel, that after tyme that a man hath defouled his baptesme by sinne, if he wole come to salvacioun, ther is noon other wey but by penitence and shrifte and satisfaccioun; / and namely by the two, if ther be a confessour to which he may shryven him; and the thridde, if he have lyf to parfournen it. /

§ 87. Thanne shal man looke and considere, that if he wole maken a trewe and a profitable confessioun, ther moste be foure condiciouns. / First, it moot been in sorweful bitternesse of herte, as seyde the king Ezekias to god: 'I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lyf in bitternesse

of myn herte.' / This condicioun of bitternesse hath fvye signes. The firste is, that confessioun moste be shamefast, nat for to covere ne hyden his sinne, for he hath agilt his god and defouled his soule. / And her-of seith seint Augustin: 'the herte travailleth for shame of his sinne'; and for he hath greet shamefastnesse, he is digne to have greet mercy of god. / Swich was the confession of the publican, that wolde nat heven up hise eyen to hevene, for he hadde offended god of hevene; for which shamefastnesse he hadde anon the mercy of god. / And ther-of seith seint Augustin, that swich shamefast folk been next foryevenesse and remissioun. / Another signe is humilitee in confessioun; of which seith seint Peter, 'Humbleth yow under the might of god.' The hond of god is mighty in confession, for ther-by god foryeveth thee thy sinnes; for he allone hath the power. / And this humilitee shal been in herte, and in signe outward; for right as he hath humilitee to god in his herte, right so sholde he humble his body outward to the preest that sit in goddes place. / For which in no manere, sith that Crist is sovereyn and the preest mene and mediatour bitwixe Crist and the sinnere, and the sinnere is the laste by wey of resoun, / thanne sholde nat the sinnere sitte as heighe as his confessour, but knele biforn him or at his feet, but-if maladie destourbe it. For he shal nat taken kepe who sit there, but in whos place that he sitteth. / A man that hath trespased to a lord, and comth for to axe mercy and maken his accord, and set him doun anon by the lord, men wolde holden him outrageous, and nat worthy so sone for to have remissioun ne mercy. / The thridde signe is, how that thy shrift sholde be ful of teres, if man may; and if man may nat wepe with hise bodily eyen, lat him wepe in herte. / Swich was the confession of seint Peter; for after that he hadde forsake Iesu Crist, he wente out and weep ful bitterly. / The fourthe signe is, that he ne lette nat for shame to shewen his confessioun. / Swich was the confessioun of the Magdelene, that ne spared, for no shame of hem that weren atte feste, for to go to oure lord Iesu Crist and biknowe to him hir sinnes. / The fifthe signe is, that a man or a womman be obeisant to receyven the penaunce that him is enioyned for hise sinnes; for certes Iesu Crist, for the giltes of a man, was obedient to the deeth. /

§ 88. The seconde condicion of verray confession is, that it be hastily doon; for certes, if a man hadde a deedly wounde, evere the lenger that he taried to warisshe him-self, the more wolde it corrupte and haste him to his deeth; and eek the wounde wolde be the wors for to hele. / And right so fareth sinne, that longe tyme is in a man unshewed. / Certes, a man oghte hastily shewen hise sinnes for manye causes; as for drede of deeth, that cometh ofte sodenly, and is in no certeyn what tyme it shal be, ne in what place; and eek the drecchinge of o synne draweth in another; / and eek the lenger that he tarieth, the ferther he is fro Crist. And if he abyde to his laste day, scarsly may he shryven him or remembre him of hise sinnes, or repenten him, for the grevous maladie of his deeth. / And for-as-muche as he ne hath nat in his lyf herkned Iesu Crist, whanne he hath spoken, he shal crye to Iesu Crist at his laste day, and scarsly wol he herkne him. / And understond that this condicioun moste han foure thinges. Thy shrift moste be purveyed bifore and avysed; for wikked haste doth no profit; and that a man conne shryve him of hise sinnes, be it of pryde, or of envye, and so forth of the speces and circumstances; / and that he have comprehended in his minde the nombre and the greetnesse

of hise sinnes, and how longe that he hath leyn in sinne; / and eek that he be contrit of hise sinnes, and in stedefast purpos, by the grace of god, nevere eft to falle in sinne; and eek that he drede and countrewaite him-self, that he flee the occasiouns of sinne to whiche he is enclyned. / Also thou shalt shryve thee of alle thy sinnes to o man, and nat a parcel to o man and a parcel to another; that is to understonde, in entente to departe thy confessioun as for shame or drede; for it nis but stranglinge of thy soule. / For certes, Iesu Crist is entierly al good; in him nis noon inperfeccioun; and therfore outher he forveyeth al parfitly or never a deel. / I seye nat that if thou be assigned to the penitauncer for certein sinne, that thou art bounde to shewen him al the remenaunt of thy sinnes, of whiche thou hast be shriven to thy curat, but-if it lyke to thee of thyn humilitee; this is no departinge of shrifte. / Ne I seye nat, ther-as I speke of divisioun of confessioun, that if thou have lycence for to shryve thee to a discreet and an honeste preest, where thee lyketh, and by lycence of thy curat, that thou ne mayst wel shryve thee to him of alle thy sinnes. / But lat no blotte be bihinde; lat no sinne been untold, as fer as thou hast remembraunce. / And whan thou shalt be shriven to thy curat, telle him eek alle the sinnes that thou hast doon sin thou were last y-shriven; this is no wikked entente of divisioun of shrifte. /

§ 89. Also the verray shrifte axeth certeine condicioun. First, that thou shryve thee by thy free wil, noght constreyned, ne for shame of folk, ne for maladie, ne swiche thinges; for it is resoun that he that trespasseth by his free wil, that by his free wil he confesse his trespas; / and that noon other man telle his sinne but he him-self, ne he shal nat nayte ne denye his sinne, ne wratthe him agayn the preest for his amonestinge to leve sinne. / The seconde condicioun is, that thy shrift be laweful; that is to seyn, that thou that shryvest thee, and eek the preest that hereth thy confessioun, been verraily in the feith of holy chirche; / and that a man ne be nat despeired of the mercy of Iesu Crist, as Caym or Iudas. / And eek a man moot accusen himself of his owene trespas, and nat another; but he shal blame and wyten him-self and his owene malice of his sinne, and noon other; / but nathelees, if that another man be occasioun or entycer of his sinne, or the estaat of a persone be swich thurgh which his sinne is agregged, or elles that he may nat pleynly shryven him but he telle the persone with which he hath sinned; thanne may he telle; / so that his entente ne be nat to bakbyte the persone, but only to declaren his confessioun. /

§ 90. Thou ne shalt nat eek make no lesinges in thy confessioun; for humilitee, per-aventure, to seyn that thou hast doon sinnes of whiche that thou were nevere gilty. / For Seint Augustin seith: if thou, by cause of thyn humilitee, makest lesinges on thy-self, though thou ne were nat in sinne biforn, yet artow thanne in sinne thurgh thy lesinges. / Thou most eek shewe thy sinne by thyn owene propre mouth, but thou be wexe doumb, and nat by no lettre; for thou that hast doon the sinne, thou shalt have the shame therfore. / Thou shalt nat eek peynte thy confessioun by faire subtile wordes, to covere the more thy sinne; for thanne bigylestow thy-self and nat the preest; thou most tellen it pleynly, be it nevere so foul ne so horrible. / Thou shalt eek shryve thee to a preest that is discreet to conseille thee, and eek thou shalt nat shryve thee for veyne glorie, ne for ypocrisye, ne for no cause, but only for the doute of

Iesu Crist and the hele of thy soule. / Thou shalt nat eek renne to the preest sodeynly, to tellen him lightly thy sinne, as who-so telleth a Iape or a tale, but avysely and with greet devocioun. / And generally, shryve thee ofte. If thou ofte falle, ofte thou aryse by confessioun. / And thogh thou shryve thee ofter than ones of sinne, of which thou hast be shriven, it is the more merite. And, as seith seint Augustin, thou shalt have the more lightly relesing and grace of god, bothe of sinne and of peyne. / And certes, ones a yere atte leeste wey it is laweful for to been housled; for certes ones a yere alle thinges renovellen. /

Explicit secunda pars Penitencie; et sequitur tercia pars eiusdem, de Satisfaccione.

§ 91. Now have I told you of verray Confessioun, that is the seconde partie of Penitence. /

The thridde partie of Penitence is Satisfaccioun; and that stant most generally in almesse and in bodily peyne. / Now been ther three manere of almesses; contricion of herte, where a man offreth himself to god; another is, to han pitee of defaute of hise neighebores; and the thridde is, in yevinge of good conseil goostly and bodily, where men han nede, and namely in sustenaunce of mannes fode. / And tak keep, that a man hath need of thise thinges generally; he hath need of fode, he hath nede of clothing, and herberwe, he hath nede of charitable conseil, and visitinge in prisone and in maladie, and sepulture of his dede body. / And if thou mayst nat visite the nedeful with thy persone, visite him by thy message and by thy yiftes. / Thise been generally almesses or werkes of charitee of hem that han temporel richesses or discrecioun in conseilinge. Of thise werkes shaltow heren at the day of dome. /

§ 92. Thise almesses shaltow doon of thyne owene propre thinges, and hastily, and prively if thou mayst; / but nathelees, if thou mayst nat doon it prively, thou shalt nat forbere to doon almesse though men seen it; so that it be nat doon for thank of the world but only for thank of Iesu Crist. / For as witnesseth Seint Mathew, *capitulo quinto*, 'A citee may nat been hid that is set on a montoyne; ne men lighte nat a lanterne and put it under a busshel; but men sette it on a candle-stikke, to yeve light to the men in the hous. / Right so shal youre light lighten bifore men, that they may seen youre gode werkes, and glorifie youre fader that is in hevene.' /

§ 93. Now as to speken of bodily peyne, it stant in preyeres, in wakinges, in fastinges, in vertuouse techinges of orisouns. / And ye shul understonde, that orisouns or preyeres is for to seyn a pitous wil of herte, that redresseth it in god and expresseth it by word outward, to remoeven harmes and to han thinges espirituel and durable, and somtyme temporel thinges; of whiche orisouns, certes, in the orisoun of the *Pater-noster*, hath Iesu Crist enclosed most thinges. / Certes, it is privileged of three thinges in his dignitee, for which it is more digne than any other preyere; for that Iesu Crist himself maked it; / and it is short, for it sholde be coud the more lightly, and for to withholden it the more esily in herte, and helpen him-self the ofter with the orisoun; / and for a man sholde be the lasse wery to seyen it, and for a man may nat excusen him to lerne it, it is so short and so esy; and for it comprehendeth in it-self alle gode preyeres. / The exposicioun of this holy preyere, that is so excellent and digne, I bitake to thise maistres of theologie; save thus muchel wol I seyn: that, whan thou

prayest that god sholde foryeve thee thy giltes as thou foryevest hem that agilten to thee, be ful wel war that thou be nat out of charitee./ This holy orisoun amenuseth eek venial sinne; and therfore it aperteneth specially to penitence./

§ 94. This preyere moste be trewely seyd and in verray feith, and that men preye to god ordinatly and discreetly and devoutly; and alwey a man shal putten his wil to be subget to the wille of god. / This orisoun moste eek been seyd with greet humblesse and ful pure; honestly, and nat to the anoyaunce of any man or womman. It moste eek been continued with the werkes of charitee. / It avayleth eek agayn the vyces of the soule; for, as seith seint Ierome, 'By fastinge been saved the vyces of the flesh, and by preyere the vyces of the soule.'/

§ 95. After this, thou shalt understonde, that bodily peyne stant in wakinge; for Iesu Crist seith, 'waketh, and preyeth that ye ne entre in wikked temptacioun.' / Ye shul understanden also, that fastinge stant in three thinges; in forberinge of bodily mete and drinke, and in forberinge of worldly Iolitee, and in forberinge of deedly sinne; this is to seyn, that a man shal kepen him fro deedly sinne with al his might. /

§ 96. And thou shalt understanden eek, that god ordeyned fastinge; and to fastinge apperteneth foure thinges. / Largenesse to povre folk, gladnesse of herte espirituel, nat to been angry ne anoyed, ne grucche for he fasteth; and also resonable houre for to ete by mesure; that is for to seyn, a man shal nat ete in untyme, ne sitte the lenger at his table to ete for he fasteth. /

§ 97. Thanne shaltow understonde, that bodily peyne stant in disciplyne or techinge, by word or by wrytinge, or in ensample. Also in weringe of heyres or of stamin, or of haubergeons on hir naked flesh, for Cristes sake, and swiche manere penances. / But war thee wel that swiche manere penances on thy flesh ne make nat thyn herte bitter or angry or anoyed of thy-self; for bettre is to caste awey thyn heyre, than for to caste away the sikernesse of Iesu Crist. / And therfore seith seint Paul: 'Clothe yow, as they that been chosen of god, in herte of misericorde, debonairetee, suffraunce, and swich manere of clothinge'; of whiche Iesu Crist is more apayed than of heyres, or haubergeons, or hauberkes. /

§ 98. Thanne is disciplyne eek in knokkinge of thy brest, in scourginge with yerdes, in knelinges, in tribulacions; / in suffringe paciently wronges that been doon to thee, and eek in pacient suffraunce of maladies, or lesinge of worldly catel, or of wyf, or of child, or othere freendes. /

§ 99. Thanne shaltow understonde, whiche thinges destourben penaunce; and this is in foure maneres, that is, drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is, desperacion. / And for to speke first of drede; for which he weneth that he may suffre no penaunce; / ther-agayns is remedie for to thinke, that bodily penaunce is but short and litel at regard of the peyne of helle, that is so cruel and so long, that it lasteth with-outen ende. /

§ 100. Now again the shame that a man hath to shryven him, and namely, thise ypocrites that wolden been holden so parfite that they han no nede to shryven hem; / agayns that shame, sholde a man thinke that, by wey of resoun, that he that hath nat been ashamed to doon foule thinges, certes him oghte nat been ashamed to do faire thinges, and that is confessiouns. / A man sholde eek thinke, that god seeth and woot alle hise thoghtes and alle hise werkes; to him may no thing been hid ne covered. / Men

sholden eek remembren hem of the shame that is to come at the day of dome, to hem that been nat penitent and shriven in this present lyf. / For alle the creatures in erthe and in helle shullen seen apertly al that they hyden in this world. /

§ 101. Now for to speken of the hope of hem that been necligent and slowe to shryven hem, that stant in two maneres. / That oon is, that he hopeth for to live longe and for to purchacen muche richesse for his delyt, and thanne he wol shryven him; and, as he seith, him semeth thanne tymely y-nough to come to shrifte. / Another is, surquidrie that he hath in Cristes mercy. / Agayns the firste vyce, he shal thinke, that oure lyf is in no sikernesse; and eek that alle the richesses in this world ben in aventure, and passen as a shadwe on the wal. / And, as seith seint Gregorie, that it aperteneth to the grete rightwisnesse of god, that nevere shal the peyne stinte of hem that nevere wolde withdrawen hem fro sinne, hir thankes, but ay continue in sinne; for thilke perpetuel wil to do sinne shul they han perpetuel peyne. /

§ 102. Wanhope is in two maneres: the firste wanhope is in the mercy of Crist; that other is that they thinken, that they ne mighte nat longe persevere in goodnesse. / The firste wanhope comth of that he demeth that he hath sinned so greetly and so ofte, and so longe leyn in sinne, that he shal nat be saved. / Certes, agayns that cursed wanhope sholde he thinke, that the passion of Iesu Crist is more strong for to unbinde than sinne is strong for to binde. / Agayns the seconde wanhope, he shal thinke, that as ofte as he falleth he may aryse agayn by penitence. And thogh he never so longe have leyn in sinne, the mercy of Crist is alwey redy to receiven him to mercy. / Agayns the wanhope, that he demeth that he sholde nat longe persevere in goodnesse, he shal thinke, that the feblesse of the devel may no-thing doon but-if men wol suffren him; / and eek he shal han strengthe of the help of god, and of al holy chirche, and of the proteccioun of aungels, if him list. / 1075

§ 103. Thanne shal men understonde what is the fruit of penaunce; and, after the word of Iesu Crist, it is the endelees blisse of hevene, / ther Ioye hath no contrarioustee of wo ne grevaunce, ther alle harmes been passed of this present lyf; ther-as is the sikernesse fro the peyne of helle; ther-as is the blisful companye that reioysen hem everemo, everich of otheres Ioye; / ther-as the body of man, that whylom was foul and derk, is more cleer than the sonne; ther-as the body, that whylom was syk, freele, and feble, and mortal, is inmortal, and so strong and so hool that ther may no-thing apeyren it; / ther-as ne is neither hunger, thurst, ne cold, but every soule replenissed with the sighte of the parfit knowinge of god. / This blisful regne may men purchace by poverte espirituel, and the glorie by lowenesse; the plentee of Ioye by hunger and thurst, and the reste by travaille; and the lyf by deeth and mortificacion of sinne. / 1080

Here taketh the makere of this book his leve.

§ 104. Now preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel tretis or rede, that if ther be any thing in it that lyketh hem, that ther-of they thanken oure lord Iesu Crist, of whom procedeth al wit and al goodnesse. / And if ther be any thing that displese hem, I preye hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn unconninge, and nat to my wil, that wolde ful fayn have seyd bettre if I hadde had

conninge. / For oure boke seith, 'al that is writen is writen for oure doctrine'; and that is myn entente. / Wherfore I biseke yow mekely for the mercy of god, that ye preye for me, that Crist have mercy on me and foryeve me my giltes: / — and namely, of my translacions and endytinges of worldly vanitees, the whiche I revoke in my retraccioun: / as is the book of Troilus; The book also of Fame; The book of the nyne-tene Ladies; The book of the Duchesse; The book of seint Valentynes day of the Parlement of Briddes; The tales of Caunterbury, thilke that sounen in-to sinne; / The book of the Leoun; and many another book, if they were in my remembrance; and many a song and many a lecherous lay; that Crist for his grete mercy foryeve me the sinne. / But of the translacion of Boece de Consolacione, and othere bokes of Legendes of seintes, and omelies, and moralitee, and devocioun, / that thanke I oure lord Iesu Crist and his blisful moder, and alle the seintes of hevene; / bisekinge hem that they from hennes-forth, un-to my lyves ende, sende me grace to biwayle my giltes, and to studie to the salvacioun of my soule: — and graunte me grace of verray penitence, confessioun and satisfaccioun to doon in this present lyf; / thurgh the benigne grace of him that is king of kinges and preest over alle preestes, that boghte us with the precious blood of his herte; / so that I may been oon of hem at the day of dome that shulle be saved: *Qui cum patre, &c.*

Here is ended the book of the Tales of Caunterbury, compiled by Geffrey Chaucer, of whos soule Iesu Crist have mercy. Amen.

APPENDIX TO GROUP A.

THE TALE OF GAMELYN.

Litheth, and lesteneth · and herkeneth aright,
And ye schulle heere a talking · of a doughty knight;
Sire Iohan of Boundys · was his righte name,
He cowde of norture y-nough · and mochil of game.
Thre sones the knight hadde · that with his body he wan;
The eldest was a moche schrewe · and sone he bigan.
His bretheren loved wel here fader · and of him were agast,
The eldest deserved his fadre's curs · and had it at the last.
The goode knight his fader · livede so yore,
That deth was comen him to · and handled him ful sore.
The goode knight cared sore · syk ther he lay,
How his children scholde · liven after his day.
He hadde ben wyde-wher · but non housbond he was,
Al the lond that he hadde · it was verrey purchas.
Fayn he wolde it were · dressed among hem alle,
That ech of hem hadde his part · as it mighte falle.

Tho sente he in-to cuntre · after wyse knightes,
To helpe delen his londes · and dressen hem to-rightes.
He sente hem word by lettres · they schulden hye blyve,
If they wolde speke with him · whyl he was on lyve.
Tho the knightes herden · syk that he lay,
Hadde they no reste · nother night ne day,
Til they comen to him · ther he lay stille
On his deth-bedde · to abyde goddes wille.
Than seyde the goode knight · syk ther he lay,
'Lordes, I you warne · for soth, withoute nay,
I may no lenger liven · heer in this stounde;
For thurgh goddes wille · deth draweth me to grounde.'
Ther nas non of hem alle · that herde him aright,
That they ne hadden reuthe · of that ilke knight,
And seyde, 'sir, for goddes love · ne dismay you nought;
God may do bote of bale · that is now y-wrought.'
Than spak the goode knight · syk ther he lay,
'Boote of bale god may sende · I wot it is no nay;
But I byseke you, knightes · for the love of me,
Goth and dresseth my lond · among my sones three.
And sires, for the love of god · deleth hem nat amis,
And forgetith nat Gamelyn · my yonge sone that is.
Taketh heed to that on · as wel as to that other;
Selde ye see ony eyr · helpen his brother.'
Tho leete they the knight lyen · that was nought in hele,
And wenten in-to counsel · his londes for to dele;
For to delen hem alle · to oon, that was her thought,
And for Gamelyn was yongest · he schulde have nought.
Al the lond that ther was · they dalten it in two,
And leeten Gamelyn the yonge · withoute londe go,
And ech of hem seyde · to other ful lowde,
His bretheren mighte yeve him lond · whan he good cowde.
Whan they hadde deled · the lond at here wille,
They comen ayein to the knight · ther he lay ful stille,
And tolden him anon-right · how they hadden wrought;
And the knight ther he lay · lyked it right nought.
Than seyde the knight · 'by seynt Martyn,
For al that ye have y-doon · yit is the lond myn;
For goddes love, neyhebours · stondeth alle stille,
And I wil dele my lond · right after my wille.
Iohan, myn eldeste sone · schal have plowes fyve,
That was my fadres heritage · whyl he was on lyve;
And my middeleste sone · fyve plowes of lond,
That I halp for to gete · with my righte hond;
And al myn other purchas · of londes and leedes,
That I biquethe Gamelyn · and alle my goode steedes.
And I biseke yow, goode men · that lawe conne of londe,
For Gamelynes love · that my queste stonde.'
Thus dalte the knight · his lond by his day,
Right on his deth-bedde · syk ther he lay;
And sone aftirward · he lay stoon-stille,
And deyde whan tyme com · as it was Cristes wille.
And anon as he was deed · and under gras y-grave,
Sone the elder brother · gyled the yonge knave;
He took into his hond · his lond and his leede,

And Gamelyn himselfe · to clothen and to feede.
He clothed him and fedde him · yvel and eek wrothe,
And leet his londes for-fare · and his houses bothe,
His parkes and his woodes · and dede nothing wel;
And seththen he it aboughte · on his faire fel.
So longe was Gamelyn · in his brotheres halle,
For the strengest, of good wil · they doutiden him alle;
Ther was non ther-inne · nowther yong ne old,
That wolde wraththe Gamelyn · were he never so bold.
Gamelyn stood on a day · in his brotheres yerde,
And bigan with his hond · to handlen his berde;
He thoughte on his londes · that layen unsawe,
And his faire okes · that down were y-drawe;
His parkes were y-broken · and his deer bireved;
Of alle his goode steedes · noon was him bileved;
His howses were unhiled · and ful yvel dight;
Tho thoughte Gamelyn · it wente nought aright.
Afterward cam his brother · walkinge thare,
And seyde to Gamelyn · 'is our mete yare?'
Tho wraththed him Gamelyn · and swor by goddes book,
'Thou schalt go bake thy-self · I wil nought be thy cook!'
'How? brother Gamelyn · how answerest thou now?
Thou spake never such a word · as thou dost now.'
'By my faith,' seyde Gamelyn · 'now me thinketh neede,
Of alle the harmes that I have · I tok never ar heede.
My parkes ben to-broken · and my deer bireved,
Of myn armure and my steedes · nought is me bileved;
Al that my fader me biquath · al goth to schame,
And therfor have thou goddes curs · brother by thy name!'
Than bispak his brother · that rape was of rees,
'Stond stille, gadeling · and hold right thy pees;
Thou schalt be fayn for to have · thy mete and thy wede;
What spekest thou, Gamelyn · of lond other of leede?'
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · the child that was ying,
'Cristes curs mot he have · that clepeth me gadeling!
I am no worse gadeling · ne no worse wight,
But born of a lady · and geten of a knight.'
Ne durste he nat to Gamelyn · ner a-foote go,
But clepide to him his men · and seyde to hem tho,
'Goth and beteth this boy · and reveth him his wit,
And lat him lerne another tyme · to answere me bet.'
Thanne seyde the child · yonge Gamelyn,
'Cristes curs mot thou have · brother art thou myn!
And if I schal algate · be beten anon,
Cristes curs mot thou have · but thou be that oon!'
And anon his brother · in that grete hete
Made his men to fette staves · Gamelyn to bete.
Whan that everich of hem · a staf hadde y-nome,
Gamelyn was war anon · tho he seigh hem come;
Tho Gamelyn seigh him come · he loked over-al,
And was war of a pestel · stood under a wal;
Gamelyn was light of foot · and thider gan he lepe,
And drof alle his brotheres men · right on an hepe.
He loked as a wilde lyoun · and leyde on good woon;
Tho his brother say that · he bigan to goon;

He fley up in-til a loft · and schette the dore fast;
Thus Gamelyn with the pestel · made hem alle agast.
Some for Gamelynes love · and some for his eye,
Alle they drowe by halves · tho he gan to pleye.
'What! how now?' seyde Gamelyn · 'evel mot ye thee!
Wil ye biginne contek · and so sone flee?'
Gamelyn soughte his brother · whider he was flowe,
And saugh wher he loked · out at a windowe.
'Brother,' sayde Gamelyn · 'com a litel ner,
And I wil teche thee a play · atte bokeler.'
His brother him answerde · and swor by seynt Richer,
'Whyl the pestel is in thin hond · I wil come no neer:
Brother, I wil make thy pees · I swere by Cristes ore;
Cast away the pestel · and wraththe thee no-more.'
'I mot neede,' sayde Gamelyn · 'wraththe me at oones,
For thou wolde make thy men · to breke myne boones,
Ne hadde I had mayn · and might in myn armes,
To have y-put hem fro me · they wolde have do me harmes.'
'Gamelyn,' sayde his brother · 'be thou nought wroth,
For to seen thee have harm · it were me right loth;
I ne dide it nought, brother · but for a fonding,
For to loken if thou were strong · and art so ying.'
'Com a-doun than to me · and graunte me my bone
Of thing I wil thee aske · and we schul saughte sone.'
Doun than cam his brother · that fikil was and fel,
And was swithe sore · agast of the pestel.
He seyde, 'brother Gamelyn · aske me thy boone,
And loke thou me blame · but I graunte sone.'
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · 'brother, y-wis,
And we schulle ben at oon · thou most me graunte this:
Al that my fader me biquath · whyl he was on lyve,
Thou most do me it have · yif we schul nat stryve.'
'That schalt thou have, Gamelyn · I swere by Cristes ore!
Al that thy fader thee biquath · though thou woldest have more;
Thy lond, that lyth laye · ful wel it schal be sowe,
And thyn howses reysed up · that ben leyd so lowe.'
Thus seyde the knight · to Gamelyn with mowthe,
And thoughte eek of falsnes · as he wel couthe.
The knight thoughte on tresoun · and Gamelyn on noon,
And wente and kiste his brother · and, whan they were at oon,
Allas! yonge Gamelyn · nothing he ne wiste
With which a false tresoun · his brother him kiste!
Litheth, and lesteneth · and holdeth your tonge,
And ye schul heere talking · of Gamelyn the yonge.
Ther was ther bisyden · cryed a wrastling,
And therfor ther was set up · a ram and a ring;
And Gamelyn was in good wil · to wende therto,
For to preven his might · what he cowthe do.
'Brother,' seyde Gamelyn · 'by seynt Richer,
Thou most lene me to-night · a litel courser
That is freisch to the spore · on for to ryde;
I most on an erande · a litel her bisyde.'
'By god!' seyde his brother · 'of steedes in my stalle
Go and chese thee the best · and spare non of alle
Of steedes or of coursers · that stonden hem bisyde;

And tel me, goode brother · whider thou wolt ryde.'
'Her bisyde, brother · is cryed a wrastling,
And therfor schal be set up · a ram and a ring;
Moche worschip it were · brother, to us alle,
Might I the ram and the ring · bring home to this halle.'
A steede ther was sadeled · smertely and skeet;
Gamelyn did a paire spores · fast on his feet.
He sette his foot in the styrop · the steede he bistrood,
And toward the wrasteling · the yonge child rood.
Tho Gamelyn the yonge · was ride out at the gat,
The false knight his brother · lokked it after that,
And bisoughte Iesu Crist · that is heven king,
He mighte breke his nekke · in that wrasteling.
As sone as Gamelyn com · ther the place was,
He lighte doun of his steede · and stood on the gras,
And ther he herd a frankeleyn · waylo-way singe,
And bigan bitterly · his hondes for to wringe.
'Goode man,' seyde Gamelyn · 'why makestow this fare?
Is ther no man that may · you helpe out of this care?'
'Allas!' seyde this frankeleyn · 'that ever was I bore!
For tweye stalworthe sones · I wene that I have lore;
A champioun is in the place · that hath y-wrought me sorwe,
For he hath slayn my two sones · but-if god hem borwe.
I wold yeve ten pound · by Iesu Crist! and more,
With the nones I fand a man · to handelen him sore.'
'Goode man,' sayde Gamelyn · 'wilt thou wel doon,
Hold myn hors, whyl my man · draweth of my schoon,
And help my man to kepe · my clothes and my steede,
And I wil into place go · to loke if I may speede.'
'By god!' sayde the frankeleyn · 'anon it schal be doon;
I wil my-self be thy man · and drawen of thy schoon,
And wende thou into the place · Iesu Crist thee speede,
And drede not of thy clothes · nor of thy goode steede.'
Barfoot and ungert · Gamelyn in cam,
Alle that weren in the place · heede of him they nam,
How he durste auntre him · of him to doon his might
That was so doughty champioun · in wrastling and in fight.
Up sterte the champioun · rapely and anoon,
Toward yonge Gamelyn · he bigan to goon,
And sayde, 'who is thy fader · and who is thy sire?
For sothe thou art a gret fool · that thou come hire!'
Gamelyn answerde · the champioun tho,
'Thou knewe wel my fader · whyl he couthe go,
Whyles he was on lyve · by seint Martyn!
Sir Iohan of Boundys was his name · and I Gamelyn.'
'Felaw,' seyde the champioun · 'al-so mot I thryve,
I knew wel thy fader · while he was on lyve;
And thyself, Gamelyn · I wil that thou it heere,
Whyl thou were a yong boy · a moche schrewe thou were.'
Than seyde Gamelyn · and swor by Cristes ore,
'Now I am older woxe · thou schalt me finde a more!'
'By god!' sayde the champioun · 'welcome mote thou be!
Come thou ones in myn hond · schalt thou never thee.'
It was wel withinne the night · and the moone schon,
Whan Gamelyn and the champioun · togider gonne goon.

The champioun caste tornes · to Gamelyn
that was prest,
And Gamelyn stood stille · and bad him
doon his best.
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · to the cham-
pioun,
'Thou art faste aboute · to bringe me
adoun;
Now I have y-proved · many tornes of
thyne,
Thow most,' he seyde, 'proven · on or
two of myne.'
Gamelyn to the champioun · yede smertely
anon,
Of all the tornes that he cowthe · he
schewed him but oon,
And caste him on the lefte syde · that
three ribbes to-brak,
And ther-to his oon arm · that yaf a gret
crak.
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · smertely anoon,
'Schal it be holde for a cast · or elles for
noon?'
'By god!' seyde the champioun · 'whether
that it be,
He that cometh ones in thin hand · schal
he never thee!'
Than seyde the frankeleyn · that had his
sones there,
'Blessed be thou, Gamelyn · that ever
thou bore were!'
The frankeleyn seyde to the champioun ·
of him stood him noon eye,
'This is yonge Gamelyn · that taughte
thee this pleye.'
Agein answerd the champioun · that lyked
nothing wel,
'He is a lither mayster · and his pley is
right fel;
Sith I wrastled first · it is y-go ful
yore,
But I was nevere in my lyf · handeled so
sore.'
Gamelyn stood in the place · allone with-
oute serk,
And seyde, 'if ther be eny mo · lat hem
come to werk;
The champioun that peyned him · to
werke so sore,
It semeth by his continaunce · that he
wil no-more.'
Gamelyn in the place · stood as stille as
stoon,
For to abyde wrasteling · but ther com
noon;
Ther was noon with Gamelyn · wolde
wrastle more,
For he handled the champioun · so won-
derly sore.
Two gentil-men ther were · that yemede
the place,
Comen to Gamelyn · (god yeve him goode
grace!)
And sayde to him, 'do on · thyn hosen
and thy schoon,
For sothe at this tyme · this feire is
y-doon.'
And than seyde Gamelyn · 'so mot I wel
fare,
I have nought yet halven-del · sold up my
ware.'
Tho seyde the champioun · 'so brouke I
my sweere,
He is a fool that ther-of byeth · thou sell-
est it so deere.'
Tho sayde the frankeleyn · that was in
moche care,
'Felaw,' he seyde · 'why lakkest thou
his ware?
By seynt Iame in Galys · that many man
hath sought,
Yet it is to good cheep · that thou hast
y-bought.'
Tho that wardeynes were · of that wras-
teling
Come and broughte Gamelyn · the ram
and the ring,
And seyden, 'have, Gamelyn · the ring
and the ram,
For the beste wrasteler · that ever here
cam.'
Thus wan Gamelyn · the ram and the ring,
And wente with moche Ioye · home in
the morning.
His brother seih wher he cam · with the
grete rowte,
And bad schitte the gate · and holde him
withoute.
The porter of his lord · was ful sore
agast,
And sterte anon to the gate · and lokked
it fast.
Now litheth, and lesteneth · bothe
yonge and olde,
And ye schul heere gamen · of Gamelyn
the bolde.

Gamelyn come ther-to · for to have comen in,
And thanne was it y-schet · faste with a pin;
Than seyde Gamelyn · 'porter, undo the yat,
For many good mannes sone · stondeth ther-at.'
Than answerd the porter · and swor by goddes berde,
'Thow ne schalt, Gamelyn · come into this yerde.'
'Thow lixt,' sayde Gamelyn · 'so browke I my chin!'
He smot the wiket with his foot · and brak awey the pin.
The porter seyh tho · it might no better be,
He sette foot on erthe · and bigan to flee.
'By my faith,' seyde Gamelyn · 'that travail is y-lore,
For I am of foot as light as thou · though thou haddest swore.'
Gamelyn overtook the porter · and his teene wrak,
And gerte him in the nekke · that the bon to-brak,
And took him by that oon arm · and threw him in a welle,
Seven fadmen it was deep · as I have herd telle.
Whan Gamelyn the yonge · thus hadde pleyd his play,
Alle that in the yerde were · drewen hem away;
They dredden him ful sore · for werkes that he wroughte,
And for the faire company · that he thider broughte.
Gamelyn yede to the gate · and leet it up wyde;
He leet in alle maner men · that gon in wolde or ryde,
And seyde, 'ye be welcome · withouten eny greeve,
For we wiln be maistres heer · and aske no man leve.
Yestirday I lefte' · seyde yonge Gamelyn,
'In my brother seller · fyve tonne of wyn;
I wil not that this compaignye · parten a-twinne,
And ye wil doon after me · whyl eny sope is thrinne,
And if my brother grucche · or make foul cheere,
Other for spense of mete or drink · that we spenden heere,
I am oure catour · and bere oure aller purs,
He schal have for his grucching · seint Maries curs.
My brother is a niggoun · I swer by Cristes ore,
And we wil spende largely · that he hath spared yore;
And who that maketh grucching · that we here dwelle,
He schal to the porter · into the drawwelle.'
Seven dayes and seven night · Gamelyn held his feste,
With moche mirth and solas · that was ther, and no cheste;
In a little toret · his brother lay y-steke,
And sey hem wasten his good · but durste he not speke.
Erly on a morning · on the eighte day,
The gestes come to Gamelyn · and wolde gon here way.
'Lordes,' seyde Gamelyn · 'wil ye so hyë?
Al the wyn is not yet dronke · so brouke I myn yë.'
Gamelyn in his herte · was he ful wo,
Whan his gestes took her leve · from him for to go;
He wolde they had lenger abide · and they seyde 'nay,'
But bitaughte Gamelyn · god, and good day.
Thus made Gamelyn his feest · and broughte it wel to ende,
And after his gestes · took leve to wende.
Litheth, and lesteneth · and holdeth youre tonge,
And ye schul heere gamen · of Gamelyn the yonge;
Herkeneth, lordinges · and lesteneth aright,
Whan alle gestes were goon · how Gamelyn was dight.
Al the whyl that Gamelyn · heeld his mangerye,
His brother thoughte on him be wreke · with his treccherye.
Tho Gamelyns gestes · were riden and y-goon,

Gamelyn stood allone · frendes had he noon;
Tho after ful soone · withinne a litel stounde,
Gamelyn was y-taken · and ful harde y-bounde.
Forth com the false knight · out of the soleer,
To Gamelym his brother · he yede ful neer,
And sayde to Gamelyn · 'who made thee so bold
For to stroye my stoor · of myn housbold?'
'Brother,' seyde Gamelyn · 'wraththe thee right nought,
For it is many day y-gon · siththen it was bought;
For, brother, thou hast y-had · by seynt Richer,
Of fiftene plowes of lond · this sixtene yer,
And of alle the beestes · thou hast forth bred,
That my fader me biquath · on his dethbed;
Of al this sixtene yeer · I yeve thee the prow,
For the mete and the drink · that we have spended now.'
Thanne seyde the false knight · (evel mot he thee!)
'Herkne, brother Gamelyn · what I wol yeve thee;
For of my body, brother · heir geten have I noon,
I wil make thee myn heir · I swere by seint Iohan.'
'*Par ma foy!*' sayde Gamelyn · 'and if it so be,
And thou thenke as thou seyst · god yelde it thee!'
Nothing wiste Gamelyn · of his brotheres gyle;
Therfore he him bigyled · in a litle whyle.
'Gamelyn,' seyde he · 'o thing I thee telle;
Tho thou threwe my porter · in the drawwelle,
I swor in that wraththe · and in that grete moot,
That thou schuldest be bounde · bothe hand and foot;

Therfore I thee biseche · brother Gamelyn,
Lat me nought be forsworen · brother art thou myn;
Lat me binde thee now · bothe hand and feet,
For to holde myn avow · as I thee biheet.'
'Brother,' sayde Gamelyn · 'al-so mot I thee!
Thou schalt not be forsworen · for the love of me.'
Tho made they Gamelyn to sitte · mighte he nat stonde,
Til they hadde him bounde · bothe foot and honde.
The false knight his brother · of Gamelyn was agast,
And sente aftir feteres · to feteren him fast.
His brother made lesinges · on him ther he stood,
And tolde hem that comen in · that Gamelyn was wood.
Gamelyn stood to a post · bounden in the halle,
Tho that comen in ther · lokede on him alle.
Ever stood Gamelyn · even upright;
But mete ne drink had he non · neither day ne night.
Than seyde Gamelyn · 'brother, by myn hals,
Now I have aspyed · thou art a party fals;
Had I wist that tresoun · that thou haddest y-founde,
I wolde have yeve thee strokes · or I had be bounde!'
Gamelyn stood bounden · stille as eny stoon;
Two dayes and two nightes · mete had he noon.
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · that stood y-bounde stronge,
'Adam spenser · me thinkth I faste to longe;
Adam spenser · now I byseche thee,
For the mochel love · my fader loved thee,
If thou may come to the keyes · lese me out of bond,
And I wil parte with thee · of my free lond.'

Thanne seyde Adam · that was the spencer,
'I have served thy brother · this sixtene yeer,
If I leete thee goon · out of his bour,
He wolde say afterward · I were a traytour.'
'Adam,' sayde Gamelyn · 'so brouke I myn hals!
Thou schalt finde my brother · atte laste fals;
Therfor, brother Adam · louse me out of bond,
And I wil parte with thee · of my free lond.'
'Up swich a forward' · seyde Adam, 'y-wis,
I wil do therto · al that in me is.'
'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'al-so mot I thee,
I wol holde thee covenant · and thou wil me.'
Anon as Adames lord · to bedde was y-goon,
Adam took the keyes, and leet · Gamelyn out anoon;
He unlokked Gamelyn · bothe handes and feet,
In hope of avauncement · that he him biheet.
Than seyde Gamelyn · 'thanked be goddes sonde!
Now I am loosed · bothe foot and honde;
Had I now eten · and dronken aright,
Ther is noon in this hous · schulde binde me this night.'
Adam took Gamelyn · as stille as ony stoon,
And ladde him in-to spence · rapely and anon,
And sette him to soper · right in a privee stede,
He bad him do gladly · and Gamelyn so dede.
Anon as Gamelyn hadde · eten wel and fyn,
And therto y-dronke wel · of the rede wyn,
'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'what is now thy reed?
Wher I go to my brother · and girde of his heed?'
'Gamelyn,' seyde Adam · 'it schal not be so.
I can teche thee a reed · that is worth the two.
I wot wel for sothe · that this is no nay,
We schul have a mangery · right on Soneday;
Abbotes and priours · many heer schal be,
And other men of holy chirche · as I telle thee;
Thow schalt stonde up by the post · as thou were hond-fast,
And I schal leve hem unloke · awey thou may hem cast.
Whan that they have eten · and wasschen here hondes,
Thou schalt biseke hem alle · to bring thee out of bondes;
And if they wille borwe thee · that were good game,
Then were thou out of prisoun · and I out of blame;
And if everich of hem · say unto us 'nay,'
I schal do an other · I swere by this day!
Thou schalt have a good staf · and I wil have another,
And Cristes curs have that oon · that faileth that other!'
'Ye, for gode!' sayde Gamelyn · 'I say it for me,
If I fayle on my syde · yvel mot I thee!
If we schul algate · assoile hem of here sinne,
Warne me, brother Adam · whan I schal biginne.'
'Gamelyn,' seyde Adam · 'by seynte Charite,
I wil warne thee biforn · whan that it schal be;
Whan I twinke on thee · loke for to goon,
And cast awey the feteres · and com to me anoon.'
'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'blessed be thy bones!
That is a good counseil · yeven for the nones;
If they werne me thanne · to bringe me out of bendes,
I wol sette goode strokes · right on here lendes.'
Tho the Sonday was y-come · and folk to the feste,
Faire they were welcomed · both leste and meste;

And ever atte halle-dore · as they comen in,
They caste their eye · on yonge Gamelyn.
The false knight his brother · ful of trechery,
Alle the gestes that ther were · atte mangery,
Of Gamelyn his brother · he tolde hem with mouthe
Al the harm and the schame · that he telle couthe.
Tho they were served · of messes two or three,
Than seyde Gamelyn · 'how serve ye me?
It is nought wel served · by god that al made!
That I sitte fasting · and other men make glade.'
The false knight his brother · ther that he stood,
Tolde alle his gestes · that Gamelyn was wood;
And Gamelyn stood stille · and answerde nought,
But Adames wordes · he held in his thought.
Tho Gamelyn gan speke · dolfully with-alle
To the grete lordes · that saten in the halle:
'Lordes,' he seyde · 'for Cristes pas-sioun,
Helpeth bringe Gamelyn · out of prisoun.'
Than seyde an abbot · sorwe on his cheeke!
'He schal have Cristes curs · and seynte Maries eeke,
That thee out of prisoun · beggeth other borwe,
But ever worthe hem wel · that doth thee moche sorwe.'
After that abbot · than spak another,
'I wold thin heed were of · though thou were my brother!
Alle that thee borwe · foule mot hem falle!'
Thus they seyden alle · that weren in the halle.
Than seyde a priour · yvel mot he thryve!
'It is moche scathe, boy · that thou art on lyve.'
'Ow!' seyde Gamelyn · 'so brouke I my bon!
Now I have aspyed · that freendes have I non.
Cursed mot he worthe · bothe fleisch and blood,
That ever do priour · or abbot ony good!'
Adam the spencer · took up the cloth,
And loked on Gamelyn · and say that he was wroth;
Adam on the pantrye · litel he thoughte,
But two goode staves · to halle-dore he broughte,
Adam loked on Gamelyn · and he was war anoon,
And caste awey the feteres · and he bigan to goon:
Tho he com to Adam · he took that oo staf,
And bigan to worche · and goode strokes yaf.
Gamelyn cam in-to the halle · and the spencer bothe,
And loked hem aboute · as they had be wrothe;
Gamelyn sprengeth holy-water · with an oken spire,
That some that stoode upright · fellen in the fire.
There was no lewed man · that in the halle stood,
That wolde do Gamelyn · eny thing but good,
But stood bisyden · and leet hem bothe werche,
For they hadde no rewthe · of men of holy cherche;
Abbot or priour · monk or chanoun,
That Gamelyn overtok · anon they yeeden doun.
Ther was non of hem alle · that with his staf mette,
That he ne made him overthrowe · and quitte him his dette.
'Gamelyn,' seyde Adam · 'for seynte Charite,
Pay large liverey · for the love of me,
And I wil kepe the dore · so ever here I masse!
Er they ben assoyled · there shal noon passe.'
'Dowt thee nought,' seyde Gamelyn · 'whyl we ben in-feere,
Kep thou wel the dore · and I wol werche heere;

Stere thee, good Adam · and lat ther noon flee,
And we schul telle largely · how many that ther be.'
'Gamelyn,' seyde Adam · 'do hem but good;
They ben men of holy chirche · draw of hem no blood,
Save wel the croune · and do hem non harmes,
But brek bothe her legges · and siththen here armes.'
Thus Gamelyn and Adam · wroughte right fast,
And pleyden with the monkes · and made hem agast.
Thider they come ryding · lolily with swaynes,
And hom ayen they were y-lad · in cartes and in waynes.
Tho they hadden al y-don · than seyde a gray frere,
'Allas! sire abbot · what dide we now heere?
Tho that we comen hider · it was a cold reed,
Us hadde ben better at home · with water and with breed.'
Whyl Gamelyn made ordres · of monkes and frere,
Ever stood his brother · and made foul chere;
Gamelyn up with his staf · that he wel knew,
And gerte him in the nekke · that he overthrew;
A litel above the girdel · the rigge-bon to-barst;
And sette him in the feteres · ther he sat arst.
'Sitte ther, brother' · sayde Gamelyn,
'For to colen thy blood · as I dide myn.'
As swythe as they hadde · y-wroken hem on here foon,
They askeden watir · and wisschen anoon,
What some for here love · and some for here awe,
Alle the servants served hem · of the beste lawe.
The scherreve was thennes · but a fyve myle,
And al was y-told him · in a litel whyle,
How Gamelyn and Adam · had doon a sory rees,
Bounden and y-wounded men · ayein the kinges pees;
Tho bigan some · stryf for to wake,
And the scherref was aboute · Gamelyn for to take.
Now lytheth and lesteneth · so god yif you good fyn!
And ye schul heere good game · of yonge Gamelyn.
Four and twenty yonge men · that heelden hem ful bolde,
Come to the schirref · and seyde that they wolde
Gamelyn and Adam · fetten, by her fay;
The scherref yaf hem leve · soth as I you say;
They hyeden faste · wold they nought bilinne,
Til they come to the gate · ther Gamelyn was inne.
They knokked on the gate · the porter was ny,
And loked out at an hol · as man that was sly.
The porter hadde biholde · hem a litel whyle,
He lovel wel Gamelyn · and was adrad of gyle,
And leet the wicket stonden · y-steke ful stille,
And asked hem withoute · what was here wille.
For al the grete company · thanne spak but oon,
'Undo the gate, porter · and lat us in goon.'
Than seyde the porter · 'so brouke I my chin,
Ye schul sey your erand · er ye comen in.'
'Sey to Gamelyn and Adam · if here wille be,
We wil speke with hem · wordes two or thre.'
'Felaw,' seyde the porter · 'stond there stille,
And I wil wende to Gamelyn · to witen his wille.'
In wente the porter · to Gamelyn anoon,
And seyde, 'Sir, I warne you · her ben come your foon;

The scherreves meyne · ben atte gate,
For to take you bothe · schulle ye nat scape.'
'Porter,' seyde Gamelyn · 'so moot I wel thee!
I wil allowe thee thy wordes · whan I my tyme see;
Go agayn to the yate · and dwel with hem a whyle,
And thou schalt see right sone · porter, a gyle.
Adam,' sayde Gamelyn · 'looke thee to goon;
We have foo-men atte gate · and frendes never oon;
It ben the schirrefes men · that hider ben y-come,
They ben swore to-gidere · that we schul be nome.'
'Gamelyn,' seyde Adam · 'hye thee right blyve,
And if I faile thee this day · evel mot I thryve!
And we schul so welcome · the scherreves men,
That some of hem schul make · here beddes in the fen.'
Atte posterne-gate · Gamelyn out wente,
And a good cart-staf · in his hand he hente;
Adam hente sone · another gret staf
For to helpen Gamelyn · and goode strokes yaf.
Adam felde tweyne · and Gamelyn felde three,
The other setten feet on erthe · and bigonne flee.
'What?' seyde Adam · 'so ever here I masse!
I have a draught of good wyn! · drink er ye passe!'
'Nay, by god!' sayde thay · 'thy drink is not good,
It wolde make mannes brayn · to lyen in his hood.'
Gamelyn stood stille · and loked him aboute,
And seih the scherreve come · with a gret route.
'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'what be now thy reedes?
Here cometh the scherreve · and wil have oure heedes.'
Adam sayde, 'Gamelyn · my reed is now this,
Abyde we no lenger · lest we fare amis:
I rede that we to wode goon · ar that we be founde,
Better is us ther loos · than in town y-bounde.'
Adam took by the hond · yonge Gamelyn;
And everich of hem two · drank a draught of wyn,
And after took her cours · and wenten her way;
Tho fond the scherreve · nest, but non ay.
The scherreve lighte adoun · and went in-to the halle,
And fond the lord y-fetered · faste withalle.
The scherreve unfetered him · sone, and that anoon,
And sente after a leche · to hele his riggeboon.
Lete we now this false knight · lyen in his care,
And talke we of Gamelyn · and loke how he fare.
Gamelyn in-to the woode · stalkede stille,
And Adam the spenser · lykede ful ille;
Adam swor to Gamelyn · by seynt Richer,
'Now I see it is mery · to be a spencer,
That lever me were · keyes for to bere,
Than walken in this wilde woode · my clothes to tere.'
'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'dismaye thee right nought;
Many good mannes child · in care is y-brought.'
And as they stoode talking · bothen infeere,
Adam herd talking of men · and neyh, him thought, they were.
Tho Gamelyn under the woode · lokede aright,
Sevene score of yonge men · he saugh wel a-dight;
Alle satte atte mete · in compas aboute.
'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'now have we no doute,
After bale cometh boote · thurgh grace of god almight;
Me thinketh of mete and drink · that I have a sight.'

Adam lokede tho · under woode-bowgh,
And whan he seyh mete · he was glad y-nough;
For he hopede to god · for to have his deel,
And he was sore alonged · after a good meel.
As he seyde that word · the mayster outlawe
Saugh Gamelyn and Adam · under woodschawe.
'Yonge men,' seyde the maister · 'by the goode roode,
I am war of gestes · god sende us non but goode;
Yonder ben two yonge men · wonder wel a-dight,
And paraventure ther ben mo · who-so lokede aright.
Ariseth up, ye yonge men · and fetteth hem to me;
It is good that we witen · what men they be.'
Up ther sterten sevene · fro the diner,
And metten with Gamelyn · and Adam spenser.
Whan they were neyh hem · than seyde that oon,
'Yeldeth up, yonge men · your bowes and your floon.'
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · that yong was of elde,
'Moche sorwe mot he have · that to you hem yelde!
I curse non other · but right my-selve;
They ye fette to yow fyve · thanne ye be twelve!'
Tho they herde by his word · that might was in his arm,
Ther was non of hem alle · that wolde do him harm,
But sayde unto Gamelyn · mildely and stille,
'Com afore our maister · and sey to him thy wille.'
'Yonge men,' sayde Gamelyn · 'by your lewte,
What man is your maister · that ye with be?'
Alle they answerde · withoute lesing,
'Oure maister is y-crouned · of outlawes king.'
'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'go-we in Cristes name;
He may neyther mete nor drink · werne us, for schame.
If that he be hende · and come of gentil blood,
He wol yeve us mete and drink · and doon us som good.'
'By seynt Iame!' seyde Adam · 'what harm that I gete,
I wil auntre to the dore · that I hadde mete.'
Gamelyn and Adam · wente forth infeere,
And they grette the maister · that they founde there.
Than seide the maister · king of outlawes,
'What seeke ye, yonge men · under woode-schawes?'
Gamelyn answerde · the king with his croune,
'He moste needes walke in woode · that may not walke in towne.
Sire, we walke not heer · noon harm for to do,
But-if we meete with a deer · to scheete ther-to,
As men that ben hungry · and mow no mete finde,
And ben harde bistad · under woode-linde.'
Of Gamelynes wordes · the maister hadde routhe,
And seyde, 'ye schal have y-nough · have god my trouthe!'
He bad hem sitte ther adoun · for to take reste;
And bad hem ete and drinke · and that of the beste.
As they sete and eeten · and dronke wel and fyn,
Than seyde that oon to that other · 'this is Gamelyn.'
Tho was the maister outlawe · in-to counseil nome,
And told how it was Gamelyn · that thider was y-come.
Anon as he herde · how it was bifalle,
He made him maister under him · over hem alle.
Within the thridde wyke · him com tyding,
To the maister outlawe · that tho was her king,
That he schulde come hom · his pees was y-mad;

And of that goode tyding · he was tho ful glad.
Tho seyde he to his yonge men · 'soth for to telle,
Me ben comen tydinges · I may no lenger dwelle.'
Tho was Gamelyn anon · withoute tarying,
Maad maister outlawe · and crouned here king.
Tho was Gamelyn crouned · king of outlawes,
And walked a whyle · under woode-schawes.
The false knight his brother · was scherreve and sire,
And leet his brother endite · for hate and for ire.
Tho were his bonde-men · sory and nothing glad,
When Gamelyn her lord · 'wolves-heed' was cryed and maad;
And sente out of his men · wher they might him finde,
For to seke Gamelyn · under woodelinde,
To telle him tydinges · how the wind was went,
And al his good reved · and his men schent
Whan they had him founde · on knees they hem sette,
And a-doun with here hood · and here lord grette;
'Sire, wraththe you nought · for the goode roode,
For we have brought you tydinges · but they be nat goode.
Now is thy brother scherreve · and hath the baillye,
And he hath endited thee · and 'wolves-heed' doth thee crye.'
'Allas!' seyde Gamelyn · 'that ever I was so slak
That I ne hadde broke his nekke · tho I his rigge brak!
Goth, greteth hem wel · myn housbondes and wyf,
I wol ben atte nexte schire · have god my lyf!'
Gamelyn com wel redy · to the nexte schire,
And ther was his brother · bothe lord and sire.
Gamelyn com boldelich · in-to the moot-halle,
And putte a-doun his hood · among the lordes alle;
'God save you alle, lordinges · that now here be!
But broke-bak scherreve · evel mot thou thee!
Why hast thou do me · that schame and vilonye,
For to late endite me · and 'wolves-heed' me crye?'
Tho thoughte the false knight · for to ben awreke,
And leet take Gamelyn · moste he no more speke;
Might ther be no more grace · but Gamelyn atte laste
Was cast in-to prisoun · and fetered ful faste.
Gamelyn hath a brother · that highte sir Ote,
As good a knight and hende · as mighte gon on foote.
Anon ther yede a messager · to that goode knight,
And tolde him al-togidere · how Gamelyn was dight.
Anon as sire Ote herde · how Gamelyn was a-dight,
He was wonder sory · was he no-thing light,
And leet sadle a steede · and the way he nam,
And to his tweyne bretheren · anon-right he cam.
'Sire,' seyde sire Ote · to the scherreve tho,
'We ben but three bretheren · schul we never be mo;
And thou hast y-prisoned · the beste of us alle;
Swich another brother · yvel mot him bifalle!'
'Sire Ote,' seide the false knight · 'lat be thy curs;
By god, for thy wordes · he schal fare the wurs;
To the kinges prisoun · anon he is y-nome,
And ther he schal abyde · til the Iustice come.'
'Parde!' seyde sir Ote · 'better it schal be;
I bidde him to maynpris · that thou graunte him me

Til the nexte sitting · of deliver-
aunce,
And thanne lat Gamelyn · stande to his
chaunce.'
'Brother, in swich a forward · I take him
to thee;
And by thy fader soule · that thee bigat
and me,
But-if he be redy · whan the Iustice sitte,
Thou schalt bere the Iuggement · for al
thy grete witte.'
'I graunte wel,' seide sir Ote · 'that it so
be.
Let deliver him anon · and tak him to
me.'
Tho was Gamelyn delivered · to sire Ote
his brother,
And that night dwellede · that on with
that other.
On the morn seyde Gamelyn · to sire Ote
the hende,
'Brother,' he seide, 'I moot · for sothe,
from thee wende,
To loke how my yonge men · leden here
lyf,
Whether they liven in Ioye · or elles in
stryf.'
'By god!' seyde sire Ote · 'that is a cold
reed,
Now I see that al the cark · schal fallen
on myn heed;
For when the Iustice sitte · and thou be
nought y-founde,
I schal anon be take · and in thy stede
y-bounde.'
'Brother,' sayde Gamelyn · 'dismaye thee
nought,
For by seint Iame in Gales · that many
man hath sought,
If that god almighty · holde my lyf and
wit,
I wil be ther redy · whan the Iustice sit.'
Than seide sir Ote to Gamelyn · 'god
schilde thee fro schame;
Com whan thou seest tyme · and bring us
out of blame.'
Litheth, and lesteneth · and holdeth
you stille,
And ye schul here how Gamelyn · hadde
al his wille.
Gamelyn wente ayein · under woode-rys,
And fond there pleying · yonge men of
prys.
Tho was yong Gamelyn · glad and blithe
y-nough,
Whan he fond his mery men · under
woode-bough.
Gamelyn and his men · talkeden in-
feere,
And they hadde good game · here maister
to heere;
They tolden him of aventures · that they
hadde founde,
And Gamelyn hem tolde ayein · how he
was fast y-bounde.
Whyl Gamelyn was outlawed · hadde he
no cors;
There was no man that for him · ferde
the wors,
But abbotes and priours · monk and
chanoun;
On hem left he no-thing · whan he mighte
hem nom.
Whyl Gamelyn and his men · made
merthes ryve,
The false knight his brother · yvel mot he
thryve!
For he was fast aboute · bothe day and
other,
For to hyre the quest · to hangen his
brother.
Gamelyn stood on a day · and, as he bi-
heeld
The woodes and the schawes · in the
wilde feeld,
He thoughte on his brother · how he him
beheet
That he wolde be redy · whan the Iustice
seet;
He thoughte wel that he wolde · withoute
delay,
Come afore the Iustice · to kepen his
day,
And seide to his yonge men · 'dighteth
you yare,
For whan the Iustice sitte · we moote be
thare,
For I am under borwe · til that I come,
And my brother for me · to prisoun schal
be nome.'
'By seint Iame!' seyde his yonge men ·
'and thou rede therto,
Ordeyne how it schal be · and it schal be
do.'
Whyl Gamelyn was coming · ther the
Iustice sat,

The false knight his brother · foryat he nat that,
To huyre the men on his quest · to hangen his brother;
Though he hadde nough that oon · he wolde have that other.
Tho cam Gamelyn · fro under woode-rys,
And brought with him · his yonge men of prys.
'I see wel,' seyde Gamelyn · 'the Iustice is set;
Go aforn, Adam · and loke how it spet.'
Adam wente into the halle · and loked al aboute,
He seyh there stonde · lordes grete and stoute,
And sir Ote his brother · fetered wel fast;
Tho went Adam out of halle · as he were agast.
Adam said to Gamelyn · and to his felawes alle,
'Sir Ote stant y-fetered · in the moot-halle.'
'Yonge men,' seide Gamelyn · 'this ye heeren alle;
Sire Ote stant y-fetered · in the moot-halle.
If god yif us grace · wel for to doo,
He schal it abegge · that broughte him ther-too.'
Thanne sayde Adam · that lokkes hadde hore,
'Cristes curs mote he have · that him bond so sore!
And thou wilt, Gamelyn · do after my reed,
Ther is noon in the halle · schal bere awey his heed.'
'Adam,' seyde Gamelyn · 'we wiln nought doo so,
We wil slee the giltif · and lat the other go.
I wil into the halle · and with the Iustice speke;
Or hem that ben giltif · I wil ben awreke.
Lat non scape at the dore · take, yonge men, yeme:
For I wil be Iustice this day · domes for to deme.
God spede me this day · at my newe werk!
Adam, com on with me · for thou schalt be my clerk.'
His men answereden him · and bade him doon his best,
'And if thou to us have neede · thou schalt finde us prest;
We wiln stande with thee · whyl that we may dure,
And but we werke manly · pay us non hure.'
'Yonge men,' seyde Gamelyn · 'so mot I wel thee!
As trusty a maister · ye schal finde of me.'
Right there the Iustice · sat in the halle,
In wente Gamelyn · amonges hem alle.
Gamelyn leet unfetere · his brother out of bende.
Thanne seyde sire Ote · his brother that was hende,
'Thou haddest almost, Gamelyn · dwelled to longe,
For the quest is oute on me · that I schulde honge.'
'Brother,' seyde Gamelyn · 'so god yif me good rest!
This day they schuln ben hanged · that ben on thy quest;
And the Iustice bothe · that is the Iuggeman,
And the scherreve bothe · thurgh him it bigan.'
Thanne seyde Gamelyn · to the Iustise,
'Now is thy power y-don · thou most nedes arise;
Thow hast yeven domes · that ben yvel dight,
I wil sitten in thy sete · and dressen hem aright.'
The Iustice sat stille · and roos nought anoon;
And Gamelyn cleved · [a-two] his cheekeboon;
Gamelyn took him in his arm · and no more spak,
But threw him over the barre · and his arm to-brak.
Durste non to Gamelyn · seye but good,
For ferd of the company · that withoute stood.

Gamelyn sette him doun · in the Iustices seet,
And sire Ote his brother by him · and Adam at his feet.
Whan Gamelyn was y-set · in the Iustices stede,
Herkneth of a bourde · that Gamelyn dede.
He leet fetre the Iustice · and his false brother,
And dede hem come to the barre · that oon with that other.
Tho Gamelyn hadde thus y-doon · hadde he no reste,
Til he had enquered · who was on the queste
For to deme his brother · sir Ote, for to honge;
Er he wiste which they were · him thoughte ful longe.
But as sone as Gamelyn · wiste wher they were,
He dede hem everichone · feteren infeere,
And bringen hem to the barre · and sette hem in rewe;
'By my faith!' seyde the Iustice · 'the scherreve is a schrewe!'
Than seyde Gamelyn · to the Iustise,
'Thou hast y-yeve domes · of the wors assise;
And the twelve sisours · that weren of the queste,
They schul ben hanged this day · so have I good reste!'
Thanne seide the scherreve · to yonge Gamelyn,
'Lord, I crye the mercy · brother art thou myn.'
'Therfore,' seyde Gamelyn · 'have thou Cristes curs,
For, and thou were maister · yit I schulde have wors.'
For to make short tale · and nought to tarie longe,
He ordeyned him a queste · of his men so stronge;
The Iustice and the scherreve · bothe honged hye,
To weyven with the ropes · and with the winde drye;
And the twelve sisours · (sorwe have that rekke!)
Alle they were hanged · faste by the nekke.
Thus ended the false knight · with his treccherye,
That ever hadde y-lad his lyf · in falsnes and folye.
He was hanged by the nekke · and nought by the purs;
That was the meede that he hadde · for his fadres curs.
Sire Ote was eldest · and Gamelyn was ying,
They wenten with here · frendes even to the king;
They made pees with the king · of the best assise.
The king loved wel sir Ote · and made him Iustise.
And after, the king made Gamelyn · bothe in est and west,
Chief Iustice · of al his free forest;
Alle his wighte yonge men · the king foryaf here gilt,
And sitthen in good office · the king hem hath y-pilt.
Thus won Gamelyn · his lond and his leede,
And wrak him of his enemys · and quitte hem here meede;
And sire Ote his brother · made him his heir,
And siththen wedded Gamelyn · a wyf bothe good and feyr;
They liveden to-gidere · whyl that Crist wolde,
And sithen was Gamelyn · graven under molde.
And so schal we alle · may ther no man flee:
God bringe us to the Ioye · that ever schal be!

GLOSSARIAL INDEX.

The references in this index are governed by the following rules: —

The letter R. refers to "The Romaunt of the Rose." Thus, R. 150 indicates line 150 of the "Romaunt."

The Minor Poems are denoted by numerals and Arabic figures. Thus, *Anvelt*, M. P. iii. 1165, indicates Minor Poem, No. iii., line 1165.

The five books of Boethius are denoted by Bo. I., Bo. II., Bo. III., Bo. IV., Bo. V. respectively, the prose and metrical sections being denoted by p. and m. Thus, *Fellíche*, Bo. II. m iii. 16, indicates Boethius, Book II., metre iii., line 16.

The five books of Troilus are denoted by T. i., T. ii., T. iii., T. iv., T. v. Thus, T. i. 754 indicates Troilus, book i., line 754.

"The House of Fame" is denoted by H. F. Thus, H. F. 64 indicates House of Fame, line 64.

"The Legend of Good Women" is denoted by L. L. (A) refers to Legend, etc., of the text in the left-hand column. Thus, L. (A) 80 refers to Legend, line 80, of the text in the left hand column.

The two books of the Astrolabe are denoted by As. i. and ii., section and line. Thus, As. i. 6, 4 indicates Astrolabe, book i., section 6, line 4. Prol. refers to the Prologue.

The Canterbury Tales are referred to by the letters A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I (without periods), the various groups into which the Tales are divided. Thus, C 8 indicates Group C, line 8.

Abbreviations. — The grammatical abbreviations *s.*, *adj.*, and *adv.*, for substantive, adjective, and adverb, will be readily understood. Special abbreviations are *v.*, verb in the infinitive; *pr. s.* (and *pt. s.*) mean the *third* person singular of the present (and past) tense, except when 1 or 2 (first person or second person) is prefixed; *pr. pl.* (and *pt. pl.*) mean likewise the *third* person plural of the present (and past) tense; *imp. s.* means second person singular of the imperative mood; and *imp. pl.*, second person plural of the same.

A.

A, *art.* a; one and the same, M. P. xxi. 5; one, T. iv. 1407; about, some, L. 2075; *al a*, the whole of a, E 1165.

A, *interj.* ah! R. 2627; M. P. iii. 213.

A, *prep.* on, in, for; *a-night*, in the night, by night, G 880; *now a dayes*, now in these days, E 1164; *a-morwe*, A 822; *a Goddes name*, in God's name, A 854.

Abaissen, *ger.* to be dismayed, Bo. IV. p. vii. 89.

Abak, *adv.* aback, back, L. 864; backwards, B 2017.

Abakward, *adv.* backward, Bo. III. m. xii. 74.

Abasshed, *pp.* abashed, confused, M. P. v. 447; ashamed, disconcerted, B 568.

Abate, *pp.* enfeebled, Bo. III. p. v. 57.

Abaved, *pp.* confounded, disconcerted, M. P. iii. 614.

Abawed, *pp.* abashed, confounded, R. 3646.

Abaysshed, Abayst, Abayseed, *pp.* abashed, disconcerted, T. iii. 1233; E 317; amazed, E 1108.

Abbay, *s.* abbey, B 1814.

Abegge, *v.* atone for, A 3938.

Abet, *s.* instigation, T. ii. 357.

Abhominaciouns, *s. pl.* abominations, horrible occurrences, B 88.

Abit, *pr. s.* (*for* abideth), abides, G 1175.

Abit, *s.* habit, dress, R. 4914; Abite, L. (A) 146.

Able, *adj.* capable of receiving, fit for, M. P. iii. 779; prepared, deemed deserving, M. P. i. 184; fit, L. 320; fit, capable, adapted, A 167.

Ablinge, *pr. pt.* enabling, lifting, Bo. III. m. ix. 42; fitting, Bo. I. m. vi. 22.

Ablucions, *s. pl.* ablutions, washings, G 856.

Aboght, Abought. See **Abye.**

Abood, *pt. s.* expected, M. P. iii. 247; abode, stopped, H. F. 1602; remained, waited, L. 309.

Abood, *s.* abiding, delay, A 965; Abodes, *pl.* T. iii. 854.

Aboute, *adv.* around, here and there, M. P. v. 247.

Abouten, *prep.* about, around, near, E 1106.

Aboven, *adv.* uppermost in luck, R. 4352.

Aboven, *prep.* above, E 826.

Abrayde. See **Abreyde.**

Abregginge, *s.* abridging, Bo. V. p. i. 102.

A-breyde, *v.* awake, start, T. iii. 1113; awake, come to my senses, H. F. 559; *pt. s.* started, awoke, E 1061; Abreyd, 1 *pt. s.* started from sleep, H. F. 110; Abrayd, *pt. s.* started up, M. P. iii 192.

Abroche, *v.* broach, D 177.

Abrood, *adv.* abroad, *i.e.* wide open, F 441.

Abusioun, *s.* an abuse, scandal, T. iv. 990, 1080; deceit, B 914.

Abyden, *v.* await, M. P. i. 1321; wait for, H. F. 1086; Abyde, *v.* to remain, wait, E 1106; Abiden, *pp.* waited, Bo. III. p. ix. 9021; Abydeth, *imp. pl.* B 11751; Abyding, *pr. pt.* awaiting, F 757.

Abydinge, *s.* expectation, Bo. II. p. iii. 72.

Abye, *v.* pay for, C 736; *pr. pl.* undergo, Bo. IV. p. iv. 96; Abought, *pp.* bought dearly, L. 1387; paid for, L. 24831; redeemed, atoned for, C 931; Abought, *pp.* purchased, M. P. xviii. 37.

Accesse, *s.* fever-fit, T. ii. 1543.

Accident, *s.* occurrence, T. iii. 918; unusual appearance, E 607; outward appearance, C 339.

Accidie, *s.* moral sloth, I 677.

Accioun, *s.* action, *i.e.* accusation, M. P. i. 20.

Accordaunt, *adj.* agreeable to, A 37.

Accorde, *pr. s. subj.* may agree, G 638; Accorded, *pp.* agreed, L. 1635; Accordeth, *pr. s.* agrees, becomes, L. 2583. See Acorde.

Accusement, *s.* accusation, T. iv. 556.

Accusour, *s.* accuser, L. 383.

Achat, *s.* buying, A 571.

Achatours, *s.* buyers, A 568.

A chekked, *pp.* checked, hindered, H. F. 2093.

Achieve, *v.* achieve, L. 1614.

Achoked, *pp.* choked, L. 2008.

Acloyeth, *pr. s.* overburdens, M. P. v. 317.

Acompas, *adv.* in a circle, L. 300.

Acomplisshe, *pr. s. subj.* fulfil, comprehend, Bo. III. p. x. 200.

Acord, Acorde, *s.* harmony, agreement, concord, M. P. v. 381; *in acord*, in tune, M. P. v. 1371; *al of oon acorde*, in tune, M. P. ii. 308; agreement, L. 139.

Acordable, *adj.* harmonious, Bo. II. m. viii. 25.

Acordant to, in harmony with, M. P. v. 303.

Acordaunce, *s.* concord, Bo. II. m. viii. 16.

Acorde, *v pr. s.* grant, allow, L. 31; Acordeth, *pr. s.* agrees, concerns, L. 985; Acordeden, *pt. pl.* agreed, L. 168, 1739; Acorden, *pr. pl.* agree, B 1137; Acording, *pr. pt.* agreeing, B 1737. See Accorde.

Acounte, *pr.* to reckon up, M. P. xxii. 18; *v.* consider, B 3891; Acounted, *pt. s.* valued, cared, M. P. ii. 1837; Acountedest, a *pt. s.* didst reckon, Bo. II. p. v. 105.

Acoye, *v.* coerce, appease, E. 35641; Acoyede, *pt. s.* caressed, Bo. II. p. iii. 80.

Acquitaunce, *s.* acquittance, release, M. P. i. 60.

Acquyte, *v.* acquit one's self, B 936; Acquiteth, *imp. pl.* B 37.

Acuinte, *v.* acquaint, T. iii. 1072.

Acustomaunce, *s.* system of habits, habitual method of life, H. F. 28; *had of a.*, was accustomed, B 3791.

Adamant, *s.* ironstone, A 1990.

Adamaunt, *s.* magnet, R. 1188.

Adamauntes, *pl.* loadstones, M. P. v. 148.

Adawe, *v.* awake, T. iii. 1190.

Adjeccioun, *s.* addition, Bo. V. p. vi. 238.

Adoun, *adv.* adown, down, M. P. ii. 151; down below, H. F. 880; dównwards, down, L. 178, 1726; at the bottom, G 779; down, B 3630.

A-dred, *pp.* afraid, frightened, M. P. iii. 1190; A-dread, M. P. iii. 493; H. F. 928.

Adressinge, *s.* directing, Bo. V. p. iv. 111.

Advertonce, *s.* attention, G 467.

Advocacyes, *s. pl.* pleas, T. ii. 1469.

A-fer, *adv.* afar, H. F. 1215; L. 212.

Aferd, *pp.* afraid, A 648; Afered, *pp.* frightened, afraid, L. (A) 53.

Affeccioun, *s.* desire, L. 1322; A 1138.

Affectis, *s. pl.* desires, T. iii. 1391.

Affermed, *pp.* agreed upon, L. 790.

Affray, *s.* affright, fright, M. P. iv. 214; H. F. 583; fear, terror, B 1147; Afray, dread, M. P. vii. 114.

Affrayed, *pp.* frightened, roused, M. P. iii. 296.

Affye, *v.* trust, R. 3755.

Affyle, *v.* polish, A 712.

Aforn, *adv.* before, R. 3614.

Afor-seyn, *prep.* opposite, T. ii. 1188.

After, *prep.* according to, M. P. i. 141; L. 2051; in accordance with, M. P. viii. 4; after, by inheritance from, L. 1072; in expectation of, for, B 467; *after as*, according as, M. P. v. 216; *after me*, according to my command, B 327; *after the yeer*, according to the time of year, F 47.

After-tales, *adv.* afterwards, T. iii. 924.

Afyne, *adv.* finally, R. 3690.

A-fyr, *adv.* on fire, M. P. i. 941; A-fyre, H. F. 1858; L. 2493.

Again, *prep.* when exposed to, L. 2426; Agayn, in comparison with, L. 189; towards, L. 110, against, B 586; near, C 1279, to meet, B 491; Agayn, against, F 142. See Again.

Agame, *adv.* in play, in jest, in mockery, M. P. iv. 277.

Agast, *pp.* terrified, M. P. vii. 116, afraid, L. 13345; Agaste, *pr. s.* deters, frightens, Bo. IV. p. vi. 154; *v.* terrify, T. ii. 901; Agasteth, *pr. s.* frightens, L. 1172.

Agaynes, *prep.* against, M. P. iii. 21; Agayns, towards, to meet, F. 911; before, in presence of, C 743. See Again.

Agayn-ward, *adv.* back again, B 442.

Agein, *prep.* against, towards, turned towards, L. 48. See Again.

Ages, *pl.* times, periods, B 3197.

Ageyns, *prep* against, L. 330.

Aggreggeth, *v.* aggravates, B 2477; Aggreggeden, *pp.* aggravated, B 2209.

Agilten, *v.* do wrong, L. 436; Agilte, *pr. s.*

wrongly committed, L. 2385; Agilt, *pp.* done wrong, L. 463; offended, M. P. i. 122.

Ago, *pp.* gone away, M. P. vii. 61; gone, dead, L. 916; past, L. 1766; *to ben ago*, to be off, M. P. v. 465; Agoon, passed away, dead, M. P. iii. 479; E 631; Agon, *pp.* gone away, C 810; Agoon, *pp. as adv.* ago, C 436.

Agreable, -es, *pl.* pleasant, Bo. III. m. ii. 34.

Agreablely, *adv.* complacently, Bo. II. p. iv. 136.

Agreablenes, *s.* equability, Bo. II. p. iv. 142.

Agree, *v.* please, T. i. 409.

A-gref, *adv.* grievously, amiss, M. P. v. 543. Lit. 'in grief.'

Agreved, *pp.* grieved, vexed, L. 345; aggrieved, E 500.

Agrief, *adv.* sorrowfully, B 4083.

Agroos, *pt. s.* shuddered, was terrified, was seized with fear, L. 830; grew terrified, L. 2314.

Agroted, *pp.* surfeited, cloyed, L. 2434.

Agryse, *v.* feel terror, H. F. 210; Agrysen, *v.* shudder, tremble, feel terror, Bo. I. p. iii. 25; *a pr. s.* dreadest, Bo. II. p. i. 76; *pr. s.* trembles, shivers, Bo. I. m. vi. 12; A-grisen, *pp.* filled with dread, Bo. III. p. i. 19.

Aguiler, *s.* needle-case, R. 98.

Aiourne, *imp. s.* adjourn, summon on another day, M. P. i. 138.

Ajuged, *pp.; a. biforn*, prejudged, Bo. I. p. iv. 124.

Ake, *gen.* to ache, H. F. 632; Aken, *pr. pl.* ache, B 2111.

Aketoun, *s.* a short sleeveless tunic, worn under the hauberk, B 2050.

Aknowe, *pp.* conscious; *am aknowe*, I acknowledge, Bo. I. p. iv. 190.

Akornes, *s. pl.* fruits, Bo. IV. m. iii. 32.

Al, *adv.* quite, M. P. v. 110; although, M. P. i. 45; for all that, M. P. iv. 274; albeit, M. P. xiii. 7; *al and somme*, each and all, all, the whole, M. P. vii. 26; *al be*, although, M. P. v. 436; *al by oon assent*, quite with one accord, M. P. v. 537; *al day*, all the day, M. P. iii. 1105; *al thus*, exactly thus, M. P. v. 30; Al, quite, entirely, L. 1765; Al, completely, B 3215; all blood = completely covered with blood, B 1967.

Al, *adj.* all; *al and som*, the whole gist of the matter, the whole matter, L. 997; *al a*, the whole of, G 996; *at al*, in every respect, E 1222; at all, wholly, C 633; Alle, *pl.* B 118; *alle and some*, one and all, E 941.

Al, *conj.* although, even if, L. 58; whether, G 846; although, E 99; Al so = as, H 80.

Al, *s.* awl, M. P. xiii. 12.

Alambyk, *s.* alembic, T. iv. 320.

Alaunts, *s.* boarhounds, A 2148.

Alayes, *s. pl.* alloy, E 1167.

Albificacioun, *s.* albification, whitening, G 805.

Alday, *adv.* every day, at any time, M. P. iv. 237; always, L. (A) 1250; Al-day, continually, F 481; always, B 1700.

Alder-, *prefix*, of all; *our alder*, of us all, R. 6948; M. P. i. 84; L. 998.

Alderbest, *adv.* best of all, M. P. iii. 87.

Alder-beste, *adj.* best of all, M. P. iii. 246.

Alderfairoste, *adj. fem.* fairest of all, M. P. iii. 1050.

Alderfirst, *adv.* for the first time, Bo. I. p. iii. 28; first of all, H. F. 1409; Alderfirste, first of all, L. 2635.

Aldermost, *adv.* most of all, L. 2219. See **Alder-**.

Alder-next, nearest of all, next, M. P. v. 244.

Ale and bread, drink and meat, B 2080.

Alegge, *v. pr. s.* allege, adduce, H. F. 314.

Alemandres, *s. pl.* almond trees, R. 1363.

Alembykes, *pl.* alembics, G 794.

Alestake, *s.* a stake projecting from an ale-house by way of a sign, A 667.

Aley, *s.* an alley, B 1758.

Aleys, *s. pl.* fruit of the wild service tree, R. 1377.

Algate, *adv.* any way, at any rate, M. P. iii. 887; at any rate, L. 361; C 1091; G 318; nevertheless, M. P. ii. 113; L. 238; at all hazards, H. F. 943; in all respects, F 885.

Algates, *adv.* at any rate, M. P. iii. 1171; anyway, T. iii. 241; at any rate, at all costs, L. 594; at any rate, in every way, wholly, F 246; nevertheless, all the same, at any rate, B 320; G 1096.

Alione, *v.* alienate, Bo. I. p. vi. 68.

Alighte, *pt. s.* descended, M. P. i. 105.

Alkamistre, *s.* alchemist, G 1204.

Alle, *dat. s. at alle*, in any and every case, M. P. iv. 37; *on alle thing*, in any case, M. P. iii. 141.

Alleggith, *v.* alleviate (aleggith), R. 2388; Allegged, *pp.* allayed, Bo. IV. p. iv. 80.

Aller, *gen. pl. of* Al, A 823.

Alliaunce, *s.* alliance, kindred, M. P. i. 58; marriage, espousal, F 337.

Allone, alone, M. P. iv. 1421 v. 455.

Allow, *1 pr. s.* I approve, I applaud, F 670.

Allye, *s.* relative, B 3393.

Almesse, *s.* alms, B 168.

Almest, *adv.* almost, B 1948.

Almicanteras, *s. pl.* circles or parallels of altitude, As. i. 18, 2.

Almury, *s.* the pointer of an astrolabe, As. i. 20, 7.

A-lofte, *adv.* aloft, T. i. 950.

A-londe, *adv.* on land, ashore, L. 2166; *him were lever a-londe*, he would rather be on land, L. 2423.

Aloon, alone; *her aloon*, all by herself, L. 2178.

Alose, *v.* praise, T. iv. 1473; Alosed, *pp.* praise R. 2354.

Al-out, *adv.* entirely, R. 4326.

Al-outerly, *adv.* quite utterly, quite absolutely,

M. P. iii. 1244; L. 626. Lit. 'all utterly.' See Al-utterly.
Alpes, *s. pl.* bullfinches, R. 658.
Als, *adv.* as, M. P. iv. 69; also, M. P. iii. 728; Al-so, as, M. P. iii. 1064; (in expressing a wish), vii. 202; as sure as, H. F. 273.
Al-so, *conj.* as, B 396; H 80.
Alswa, *adv.* also, A 4085.
Alther-fastest, *adv. sup.* as fast as possible, H. F. 2131.
Altherfirst, *adv.* first of all, at first, H. F. 1368.
Alther-firste, *adj.* first of all, M. P. iii. 1173.
Altitude, *s.* the elevation of a star, etc., above the horizon, As. i. 1, 6; 13, 6.
Al to-shar, *pt. s.* cut in pieces, R. 1858.
Al-utterly, *adv.* quite absolutely, beyond all doubt, H. F. 296. See Al-outerly.
Alwey, *adv.* continually, always, E 458; ceaselessly, F 422; I 11.
Alwey, *adv.* at all events, T. v. 298.
A-lyve, *adv.* alive, M. P. iii. 915.
Am, *in phr.* it am I; it is I, B 1109.
Amadrides, *s. pl.* hamadryads, A 2928.
Amalgaming, *s.* the formation of an amalgam, G 771.
Amased, *pp.* amazed, G 935.
A-mayed, *pp.* dismayed, T. iv. 641.
Ambages, *s. pl.* duplicities, T. v. 897.
Ambel, *s.* amble; *an a.*, in an amble, at an ambling place, B 2075.
Ambes as, double aces, B 124.
Amblere, *s.* easy-paced horse, A 469.
Ameled, *pp.* enamelled, R. 1080.
Amende, *v.* to improve, F 197; Amended, *pp.* surpassed, B. 3444; *pt. s.* improved, did good, M. P. iii. 1102.
Amenuse, *v.* diminish, I 360; depreciate, I 496.
Amerciments, *s. pl.* fines, I 752.
Amesureth, *pr. s.* measures, Bo. II. p. i. 104.
Ameved, *pt. s.* moved, changed; *nought a.*, changed not, altered not, E 498; Amoeved, *pp.* perturbed, I 670.
Amidde, *prep.* amid, in the midst of, F 409.
Amiddes, *adv.* in the midst, M. P. v. 277.
Amis, *adv.* amiss, M. P. iii. 1141; *seyde amis*, gave an unwelcome answer, M. P. v. 446; wrongly, B 3370; A-mis, amiss, wrong, L. 1291.
Amonesten, *v.* warn, admonish, I 76.
Amonges, *adv.* sometimes, variously, Bo. II. p. i. 131.
Amonges, *prep.* amongst, B 3344; G 608.
Amoniciоun, *s.* pointing out, Bo. I. p. iv. 11.
Amorettes, *s. pl.* amorous girls, R. 892; amourettes, R. 4755.
A-morwe, Amorwe, in the morning, M. P. iii. 1103; H. F. 2106.
Amounteth, *pr. s.* means, B 569; amounts to, F 108.
Amphibologyes, *s. pl.* equivocations, T. iv. 1406.
Amy, *s.* friend, C 318.
An, a; An eighte busshels, a quantity equal to eight bushels, C 771.
An, *prep.* on, L. 1191.
Ancille, *s.* handmaiden, M. P. i. 109.
Ancre, *s.* anchor, M. P. x. 38.
And, *conj.* if, M. P. vi. 112; L. 319, 1790; E 2433; *and if*, if, M. P. iii. 548.
Angerly, *adv.* grievously, R. 3511.
Angle-hook, *s.* fish-hook, M. P. iv. 238.
Angres, *s. pl.* griefs, R. 2554.
Angry, *adj.* grievous, R. 2628.
Anguissh, *s.* anxiety, Bo. III. p. iii. 38.
Anguissheth, *pr. s.* wounds, pains, Bo. III. m. vii. 1.
Anguysschous, Angwyssous, *adj.* anxious, Bo. II. m. v. 37; Bo. III. p. i. 9.
Anhanged, *pp.* hung, B 3945, 3949.
An hye, on high, H. F. 215.
Anientissed, *pp.* annihilated, B 2438.
A-night, *adv.* by night, at night, L. 1292, 1475; E 464.
Anker, *s.* anchor, R. 3780; L. 2501; anchoress, R. 6348.
Anlas, *s.* dagger, A 357.
Annexed, *pp.* attached, C 482.
Annueleer, *s.* a priest who received annual payments, a chaplain, G 1012.
Annunciat, *pp.* pre-announced, *i.e.* whose birth was foretold, B 3205.
Anon, *adv.* immediately, forthwith, B 326; C 864.
Anon-right, *adv.* immediately, M. P. iii. 354; L. 115; G 1141; Anoon-right, H. F. 132.
Anoon, *adv.* immediately, M. P. iii. 1299; Anon, B 34.
Anoy, *s.* torture, Bo. III. m. xii. 44.
Anoye, *v.*; *pr. s.* annoys, vexes, M. P. v. 518; Anoyeth, *pr. s. impers.* it annoys, vexes, G 1036.
Answere, *v.* be suitable for, Bo. IV. p. iii. 78; Answerden, *pt. pl.* answered, L. 1847; Answerde, *pt. s.* answered, E 21.
Antem, *s.* anthem, B 1850.
Antiphoner, *s.* anthem-book, B 1709.
Anvelt, *s.* anvil, M. P. iii. 1165.
Aornement, *s.* adornment, I 432.
Apaire, *v.* deteriorate, grow worse, H. F. 756.
Apalled. See Appalled.
Aparaile. See Apparaile.
Aparailements, *s. pl.* ornaments, Bo. II. p. v. 201.
Aparayles, *s. pl.* ornaments, Bo. II. p. iv. 78.
Aparceyve. See Aperceyve.
Apassed, *pp.* passed away, Bo. II. p. v. 39.
Apayd, Apayed, *pp.* pleased, satisfied, L. 766; T. i. 649; *evel apayd*, ill-pleased, M. P. vii. 123; L. 80; G 921.

Apayre. See **Apeiren.**
Apayse. See **Apese.**
Ape, *s.* ape, H. F. 1212; dupe, G 1313; Apes, *pl.* H. F. 1806.
Aperceyve, *v.* to perceive, E 600; Aperceyveth, *pr. s.* E 1018.
Aperceyvinges, *pl.* perceptions, observations, F 286.
Apert, Aperte, *adv.* openly, F 531.
Apertenant, *adj.* belonging to, such as belongs to, M. P. ii. 70; Apertenaunt, B 3505.
Apertenen, *v.* belong to, I 410.
Apertening, *pr. pt.* appertaining, G 785.
Apertinent, *adj.* appertaining, suitable, E 1010.
Apertly, *adv.* openly, clearly, I 294.
Apese, Apeise, *v.* appease, pacify, E 433; H 98.
Apeseth, *imp. pl.* appease, mitigate, M. P. iv. 10.
Apeyren, *v.* impair, depreciate, I 1078; A 3147; *pp.* impaired, Bo. I. p. v. 74.
Apeyse. See **Apese.**
Apeysen, *pr. pl.* appease, T. iii. 22.
Aposed. See **Apposed.**
Apostelles, *s. pl.* apostles, G 1002.
Apoynte, *adv.* exactly, T. v. 1620.
Apoynte, *refl. v.* make up one's mind, T. ii. 691.
Appalled, *pp.* made pale or feeble, F 365; B 1292.
Apparaile, *s.* apparel, attire, M. P. i. 153; E 1208.
Apparaile, *v.* prepare, L. 2473.
Apparence, *s.* appearance, seeming, H. F. 265; F 218.
Appese. See **Apese.**
Appetyteth, *pr. s.* seeks to have, desires, L. 1582.
Applyen, *v.* be attached to, Bo. V. p. iv. 16.
Apposed, *pp.* opposed, alleged, Bo. I. p. v. 60; *pt. s.* questioned, G 363.
Appreved, *pp.* approved, E 1349.
Appropred, *pp.* appropriated, made the property of, M. P. xiv. 18.
Approwours, *s. pl.* informers, D 1343.
Apyked, *pp.* trimmed, A 365.
Aqueynte, *v.*; *me aqueynte*, make myself acquainted, M. P. iii. 532; Aqueynteden, *pt. pl.* became acquainted, H. F. 250.
Arace, *v.* eradicate, tear away, M. P. xxi. 18; E 1103; *pp.* torn away, Bo. III. p. xi. 186.
Aray, *s.* array, dress, M. P. iv. 176; order, E 262; ordinance, E 670.
Arayed, *pp.* dressed, L. 1207; F 389; arranged, ordered, B 252.
Arbitre, *s.* will, choice, Bo. V. p. iii. 20.
Arblasters, *s. pl.* crossbowmen, R. 4196.
Archaungel, *s.* titmouse, R. 915.
Arches. See **Ark.**
Archewyves, *s. pl.* archwives, ruling wives, E 1195.
Ardaunt, *adj.* ardent, Bo. III. m. xii. 17; eager, Bo. IV. p. iii. 130.
A-rede, *v.* read, interpret, M. P. iii. 289.
Aresoneth, *pr. s.* controverts, R. 6220.
Arest, *s.* socket of a spear, A 2602.
Areste, *s.* delay, L. 806; hesitation, L. 1929; *and hence*, deliberateness of action, deliberation, L. 397.
Arette, *v.* account, attribute, R. 3327; A 726; Aretted, *pp.* A 2729; Aretten, *v.* impute, Bo. II. p. iv. 15.
Arewe, *adv.* in a row, D 1254.
Areysed, *pp.* extolled, praised, L. 1525.
Argoile, *s.* potter's clay, G 813.
Argumenten, *pr. pl.* argue, B 212.
Aright, *adv.* rightly, properly, F 694.
Arist, *pr. s.* arises, B 265.
Ariste, *s.* arising, As. ii. 12, 16.
Ark, *s.* arc, referring to the arc of the horizon extending from sunrise to sunset, B 2.
Arminge, *s.* arming, putting on of armor, B 2037.
Armipotente, *adj.* mighty in arms, A 2441.
Armlees, *adj.* armless, without an arm, B 3393.
Armoniak, *adj.* ammoniac; applied to *bole*, G 790, and *sal*, G 798.
Armonye, *s.* harmony, M. P. iii. 313.
Armoure, Armure, *s.* armor, M. P. iv. 130; B 2009.
Arn, *pr. pl.* are, H. F. 1008; E 342.
Aroos, *pt. s.* arose, stood up, L. 831.
A-roume, *adv.* at large, in an open space, H. F. 540.
A-rowe, *adv.* in a row, H. F. 1835.
Arrace. See **Arace.**
Array, Arraye. See **Aray, Arayed.**
Arrette. See **Arette.**
Arrivage, *s.* coming to shore, H. F. 223.
Arryve, *pt. s.* drove ashore, Bo. IV. m. iii. 7.
Ars-metrik, *s.* arithmetic, A 1898.
Art, *s.* kind, sort, E 1241.
Art, *s.* cunning, M. P. v. 245.
Arten, *v.* constrain, T. i. 388.
Artik, *adj.* arctic, As. i. 14, 10.
Artow, *for* art thou, H. F. 1872.
Arwes, *pl.* arrows, M. P. v. 212; A 107.
Aryve. See **Arryve.**
As, as if, M. P. iii. 1323; As, so, *in asseverations*, M. P. iii. 838, 1235; As, like, B 1864; As, expletive, expressing a wish; *as have*, may He have, B 1061; *as lat*, pray let, B 859; *as after*, according to, B 3555; *as in, i.e.* for, B 3688; *as now*, at this time, F 652; on the present occasion, G 944; for the present, with the matter on hand, G 1019; *as to*, with reference to, F 107; *as of*, as concerning, M. P. v. 26; *as swythe*, at once, M. P. vii. 226; *as that*, as though, M. P. iii. 1200; as soon as.

F. 615; *as ther*, there, M. P. iv. 117; *as to my wit*, according to my understanding, M. P. v. 547; *as ferforth as*, as far as, B 19. As is short for *Also*. See **Als.**

As, *s.* an ace, B 3851; Ambes as, double aces, B 124.

Asay. See **Assay.**

Ascaunce, *conj.* in case that, on the chance that, L. 2203; *adv.* perhaps, G 838.

Ascencioun, *s.* ascension, rising up, G 778.

Ascende, *v.* ascend, rise (a term in astrology), I 11; *pr. pt.* ascending, in the ascendant, *i.e.* near the eastern horizon, F 264.

Ascendent, *s.* ascendant, A 417; Ascendentes, *pl.* H. F. 1268. The ascendent is (properly) that point of the zodiacal circle which is seen to be just ascending above the horizon at a given moment.

Ascry, *s.* shout, T. ii. 611.

Asemble. See **Assemble.**

Ash. See **Asshe.**

Aske, *pr. s. subj.* may ask, M. P. iii. 32; **Asken**, *v.* to ask, B 101.

Aslake, *v.* abate, A 3553; *pp.* A 1760.

A-slope, *adv.* aside, crossly, R. 4464.

Asonder, *adv.* asunder, apart, B 1157.

Asp, *s.* aspen, A 2921; Aspe, L. 2648.

Aspectes, planetary relations, T. ii. 682; astrological aspects, L. 2597.

Aspre, *adj.* fierce, hardy, M. P. vii. 23; vexatious, Bo. III. p. viii. 21; cruel, Bo. II. p. viii. 42.

Asprenesse, *s.* asperity, Bo. IV. p. iv. 179.

Aspye, *s.* spy, C 755.

Aspyen, *v.* espy, T. ii. 649.

Assaille, *v.* to assail, attack, B 3953.

Assay, *s.* trial, M. P. iii. 552; D 290; trial, test, L. (A) 28; *doon his assay*, make his attempt, L. 1594; Assayes, *pl.* trials, E 697.

Assaye, *v.* try, M. P. iii. 574; *imp. s.* let him try, E 1229; *pr. s.* experiences, Bo. III. m. ii. 24; Assayed, *pp.* tried, E 1054; Assayen, *pr. pl.* try, L. 487.

Asse, *s.* ass, M. P. v. 255.

Asseged, *pp.* besieged, A 881.

Assemble, *ger.* to amass, Bo. III. p. viii. 9; Assembled, *pp.* united, G 50.

Assendent, planetary influence, As. ii. 4. See **Ascendent.**

Assent, *s.* consent, conspiracy, C 758.

Assente, *v.* agree to, A 374; Assenten, *pr. pl.* assent, agree, E 176.

Asseth, *adv.* enough; *make asseth*, satisfy, R. 5600.

Asshe, *s.* ash tree, M. P. v. 176.

Assoilen, *ger.* to discharge, pay, Bo. V. p. i. 16; *pp.* explained, Bo. V. p. vi. 350; *pr. s.* absolve, pardon, C 913.

Assoiling, *s.* absolution, A 661.

Assure, *s* assurance, protestation, M. P. vii. 331.

Assure, *v.* make sure; *her assure, refl.*, be bold enough, L. 908; 1 *pr. s.* comfort, give confidence to, M. P. v. 448; Assured, *pt. s.* confirmed, B 3378.

Assured, *adj.* settled, self-reliant, M. P. ii. 40.

Assyse, *s.* judgment, M. P. i. 36; assize, A 314.

Astate, *s.* estate, R. 6856.

Asterte, *v.* start away, get away, withdraw, M. P. iii. 1154; escape, L. 1802; escape from, L. 2338; Asterted, *pt. s.* escaped, B 437.

A-stoned, *pp.* astonied, amazed, L. (A) 164; Astonied, *pt. s.* astonished, E 316.

Astonyeth, *pr. s.* astonishes, M. P. v. 5.

Astonyinge, *s.* astonishment, Bo. IV. p. v. 37.

Astored, *pp.* stored, provided, A 609.

Astromye, *s.* astronomy, A 3451.

Asure, *adj. as s.* blue, M. P. vii. 330; azure, blue, E 254.

Aswage, *v.* to assuage, B 3834.

A-sweved, *pp.* dazed, put to sleep, H. F. 549.

A-swown, *pp. as adv.* in a swoon, M. P. iii. 123; A-swowe, M. P. vii. 354; Aswowne, E 1079.

At, *prep.* as to, M. P. vi. 114; *at shorte wordes*, briefly, in a word, M. P. v. 481; *at erste*, *adv.* first of all, H. F. 512; At, *prep.* at; *at me*, with me, with respect to me, B 1975; from, E 653; from, of, G 542, 621.

At-after, *prep.* after, F 302.

Atake, *v.* to overtake, G 556; *pp.* overtaken, M. P. iv. 55; L. 2182.

Ataste, 2 *pr. s. subj.* taste, Bo. II. p. i. 44.

Atazir, *s.* evil influence, B 305.

Ateint, *pp.* apprehended, Bo. III. p. iii. 27.

Atempraunce, *s.* temperament, Bo. IV. p vi. 234.

Atempre, *adj.* temperate, mild, M. P. iii. 341; Attempre, M. P. v. 204.

Atempre, *v. pr. s.* attempers, Bo. I. m. ii. 26.

Atempringe, *s.* controlling, Bo. V. p. iv. 111.

Ateyne, *v.* attain, succeed in, M. P. iv. 161.

Athinken, *v.* vex, T. v. 878.

Atones, *adv.* at once, at one and the same time, L. 1840; B. 670.

Atoon, *adv.* at one, E 437.

At point, at point, ready, T. iv. 1638.

At-rede, *v.* outwit, surpass in advice, A 2449.

At-renne, *v.* outrun, A 2449.

Attamed, *pp.* broached, B 4008.

Atte, *for* at the, R. 4192; *atte fulle*, at the full, in completeness, B 203; *atte laste*, at the last, B 506; *atte leste*, at the least, at least, E 130.

Attempre. See **Atempre.**

Atteyne, *v.* to attain, E 447.

Attour, *s.* attire, R. 3718.

Attriciоun, *s.* contrition, T. i. 557.

Attry, *adj.* venomous, I 583.

A-tweyn, *adv.* in two, M. P. iii. 1193.

Atwinne, *adv.* apart, G 1170.
A-two, *adv.* in two, asunder, L. 758; B 600.
Atyr, *s.* attire, dress, M. P. v. 225.
Auctor. See **Auctour.**
Auctoritee, *s.* authority, especially of an esteemed writer, D 1.
Auctour, *s.* author, H. F. 314; E 1141. See Autour.
Audience, *s.* audience, attention, hearing, M. P. v. 308; audience, B 3991; hearing, E 329.
Aught, *adv.* by any chance, in any way, B 1034; at all, G 597.
Augrim, *s.* arithmetical notation, As. i. 8, 7.
Augrim stones, arithmetical counters, A 3210.
Aumener, *s.* alms-bag, R. 2087.
Aunoestre, *s.* ancestor, M. P. v. 41.
Aungel, *s.* angel, M. P. v. 191.
Aungellyke, *adv* like an angel, L. 236.
Auntred, *pt. s.* adventured, A 4205.
Auntrous, *adj.* adventurous, B 2099.
Autentyke, *adj.* authentic, M. P. iii. 1086.
Auter, *s.* altar, M. P. v. 249.
Autoritees, *pl.* authorities, L. (A) 83.
Autour, *s.* author, L. 1228; Autours, *pl.* L. (A) 88. See **Auctour.**
Availeth, *pr. s. impers.* it avails, M. P. xi. 15.
Avale, *v.* fall, T. iii. 626; doff, A 3122.
Avantage, *s.* convenience, profit; *to don his a.*, to suit his own interests, B 729; *as adj.* advantageous, B 146.
Avante. See **Avaunte.**
Avaunce, *v.* aid, cause to prosper, H. F. 640; help, M. P. x. 31; profit, A 246; Avaunced, *pp.* advanced, C 410.
Avaunt, *adv.* forward, R. 4790.
Avaunt, *s.* vaunt, boast, A 227.
Avaunte, *ger.* to extol, H. F. 1788; *1 pr. s.* boast, M. P. v. 470; Avaunte her, *v.* boast herself, M. P. vii. 296.
Avauntour, *s.* boaster, M. P. v. 430.
Avenaunt, *adj.* comely, suitable, R. 1263.
Aventure, *s.* luck, chance, M. P. iv. 21; hard hap, M. P. iv. 199; peril, B 1151; misfortune, L. 657; *good aventure*, good fortune, M. P. v. 131; *in aventure and grace*, on luck and favor, M. P. iv. 60; *of aventure*, by chance, H. F. 2090; Aventures, *pl.* adventures, E 15; accidents, C 934.
Aventurous, *adj.* random, Bo. I. p. vi. 110; adventitious, Bo. II. p. iv. 19.
Avisee, *adj.* deliberate, L. 1521.
Avisement, *s.* determination, L. 1417.
Avisioun, *s.* vision, H. F. 7, 104.
Avouterye, *s.* adultery, M. P. v. 361.
A-vowe, *s.* vow, avowal, M. P. iii. 93.
Avys, *s.* deliberation, T. iii 453; opinion, I 54.
Avyse, *1 pr. s.*; *avyse me*, reflect, M. P. iii. 697; Avysen me, *ger.* to reflect, consider, M. P. v. 648; Avyse thee, *imp. s.* bethink thyself, consider, L. 335; Avysed her, *pt. s.* reflected, considered, L. 867; Avyse, *v. refl.* consider, B 664.
Avysement, *s.* deliberation, T. iv. 936; *of short avysement*, after a brief deliberation, M. P. v. 555; consideration, L. 407.
Await, *s.* watch, H 149; Have hir in awayt, watch her, B 3915.
Awaiteth, *pr. s.* waits, watches, B 1776.
Awaitour, *s.* lier in wait, Bo. IV. p. iii. 137.
Awak, *imp. s.* awake, M. P. iii. 179; Awaketh, *imp. pl.* awake ye, M. P. iii. 183; Awook, *1 pt. s.* awoke, aroused, M. P. iii. 1324.
Awayt, *s.* delay, T. iii. 579.
Awaytes. See **Await.**
Awaytes, *pl.* plots, Bo. III. p. viii. 18.
Awayting, *s.* attending, M. P. vii. 250.
Awen, *adj.* own, A 4239.
Aweye, *adv.* away, gone, M. P. vii. 319; from home, B 593; astray, B 609.
A-whaped, *pp.* amazed, stupefied, M. P. vii. 215; terrified, scared, L. 132.
Awook. See **Awak.**
Awreke, *v.* avenge, M. P. ii. 11; Awroken, *pp.* A 3752.
Axe, *v.* ask, M. P. i. 120; *ger.* M. P. iii. 416; Axeth, *pr. s.* L. 1456; requires, M. P. xiii. 16; Axed, *pt. s.* M. P. iii. 185; Axen, *v.* ask, L. 835.
Axing, *s.* asking, request, H. F. 1541; question, L. (A) 239; Axinge, questioning, M. P. xvii. 3.
Ay, *adv.* ever, always, M. P. ii. 95; *ay whil that*, all the time that, M. P. iv. 252.
Ay-dwellinge, *adj.* perpetual, ever-abiding, Bo. V. p. vi. 108.
Ayein, *adv.* again, back, M. P. v. 100; Ayeyn, M. P. i. 68; Ayen, M. P. v. 295.
Ayein-ledinge, *adj.* returning, reconducting, Bo. III. m. ix. 46.
Ayeins, *prep.* towards, at the approach of, M. P. v. 342; against, E 320. See **Ageyns.**
Ayeinward, *adv.* again, on the other hand, Bo. II. p. iv. 141; Ayenward, on the other hand, T. iv. 1027.
Ayel, *s.* grandfather, A 2477.
Ayen, *prep.* against, when meeting, M. P. v. 443.
Aylen, *v.* ail, L. 1833.
Azimutz, *s. pl.* divisions of an astrolabe, As. i. 19, 9.

B.

Ba, *imp. s.* kiss, A 3709.
Babewinnes, *pl.* (lit. baboons), grotesque figures in architecture, H. F. 1189.
Bachelrye, *s.* company of young men, E 270.
Bad, *pt. s.* bade, F 373. See **Bidde.**
Badde, *adj.* bad, L. (A) 277; Badder, F 224.
Baggeth, *pr. s.* looks askant, M. P. iii. 623.

Baggingly, *adv.* squintingly, R. 292.

Baillye, *s.* jurisdiction, R. 4217.

Baily, bailiff, R. 6331.

Bak, *s.* cloth for the back, coarse mantle, cloak, G 881.

Bake, *pp.* baked, B 95.

Balaunce, *s.*; *in balaunce*, at hazard, in uncertainty, R. 4667.

Bale, *s.* bale, sorrow, M. P. iii. 535; *for bote ne bale*, for good nor for ill, M. P. iii. 227.

Balkes, *s. pl.* beams; the transverse beams beneath the roof, A 3626.

Balled, *adj.* bald, A 198.

Bane, *s.* destruction, ruin, death, H. F. 408; cause of death, M. P. iv. 196; death, L. 2159; bane, slayer, L. 2147.

Banes, *pl.* bones, A 4073.

Bar, *pt. s.* bore, carried, M. P. iii. 196; *bar her on honde*, brought against her a charge which he feigned to believe, M. P. vii. 158; *bar on honde*, accused, T. iii. 1154; Bare, 2 *pt. s.* didst bear, L. 2229. See Bere.

Barbe, *s.* a kind of veil, T. ii. 110.

Barbre, *adj.* barbarian, B 281.

Bareyne, *adj.* barren, B 68; E 448.

Bargeyn, *s.* strife, R. 2551.

Barm-clooth, *s.* apron, A 3236.

Barme, *s. dat.* bosom, lap, B 3256, 3630.

Baronage, *s.* company of barons, retinue of lords, B 329.

Barres, *s. pl.* cross-stripes, R. 1103; A 329; ornamental bands, L. 1200.

Barringe, *s.* cross-striping, I 417.

Basilicok, *s.* basilisk, I 853.

Bataile, *s.* troop, Bo. V. m. i. 4; Bataille, battle, B 3879; G 386.

Batailen, *v.* fight, Bo. I. p. iv. 258.

Batailled, *pp.* battlemented, indented, B 4050.

Batayle, *s.* battle, M. P. v. 539.

Bate, *s.* strife, R. 4235.

Bathe, *adj.* both, A 4087.

Bauderie, *s.* gayety, A 1926.

Baudy, *adj.* dirty, G 635.

Baundon, *s* control, R. 1163.

Bawdrik, *s.* baldrick, belt, A 116.

Bawme, *s.* balm, T. ii. 53; H. F. 1686.

Bayard, a horse's name, G 1413.

Bayte, *v.* to bait, feed, eat, B 466; Bayten, T. i. 192; Baiteth, *pr. s.* feeds, B 2103.

Be, 1 *pr. s.* am, M. P. iii. 588; 1 *pr. pl.* are, M. P. iii. 582; *pr. s. subj.* it should be, M. P. iv. 49; *pp.* been, M. P. iii. 972; *I had be*, I should have been, M. P. iii. 222; *be as be may*, however it be, L. 1852. See Ben, Beth.

Beau, *adj.* fair; *beau sir*, fair sir, H. F. 643.

Be-bled, *pp.* blooded, covered with blood, Bo. III. m. ii. 16.

Bechen, *adj.* made of beech, G 1160.

Become, *v.* go to, L. 2214.

Bed, *s.* station, B 3862.

Bede, *v.* offer, H. F. 32; T. v. 785; offer, proffer, G 1065; *ger.* to present, M. P. i. 110; 1 *pr. s.* proffer, M. P. vii. 304; 1 *pt. pl.* directed, I 65; *pp.* bidden, M. P. iii. 194. See Bidde.

Bede, *pt. pl. and pp. of* Bidde.

Bedes, *pl.* beads, A 159.

Bedote, *v.* befool, L. 1547.

Bedrede, *adj.* bedridden, E 1292.

Beek, *s.* beak, F 418.

Been, *pl.* bees, F 204.

Beest, *s.* beast, F 460; *beest roial*, royal beast, *i.e.* Leo, F 264.

Beet, *pt. s.* touched, R. 129.

Beforn, *adv.* before, previously, M. P. v. 107.

Began, 2 *pt. s.* didst begin, L. 2230 (the older form is *begunne*); Begonne, *pp.* begun, L. 196.

Beggestere, *s.* beggar (female beggar), A 242.

Begon, *pp.* begone; *wo begon*, beset by woe, distressed, L. 2497; *wo begoon*, L. 1487.

Begoon, *pp.*; *wel begoon*, joyous, M. P. v. 171.

Behest, *s.* promise, M. P. v. 245.

Behewe, *pp.* hewn, carved, H. F. 1306.

Behoteth, *pr. s.* promises, M. P. iii. 621; Behette, *pt. s.* M. P. v. 436.

Bek, *s.* beak, M. P. v. 378; Bekes, *pl.* beaks, L. 148.

Bekke, 1 *pr. s.* I nod, C 396; Bekked, nodded, T. ii. 1260.

Beknew, *pt. s.* confessed, L. 1058.

Bel amy, *i.e.* good friend, fair friend, C 318.

Bele, *adj. fem.* fair, H. F. 1796.

Belle, *s.* bell (of a clock), M. P. iii. 1322.

Belweth, *pr. s.* belloweth, roars, H. F. 1803.

Bely, *s.* bellows, I 351.

Bely-naked, *adj.* stark naked, E 1326.

Beme, *s.* trumpet, H. F. 1240; *pl.* B 4588.

Ben, Been, *v.* be, M. P. i. 182; 2 *pr. pl.* are, M. P. xix. 24; *pp.* been, M. P. iii. 530; Beth, *imp. pl.* be ye, C 683.

Bench, *s.* bench (law-court), M. P. i. 159.

Bend, *s.* strap, R. 1079.

Bendinge, *s.* slant-striping, I 417.

Bene, *s.* bean, M. P. xi. 29; B 94.

Benedicite, bless ye, T. i. 780; B 1170.

Benethen, *prep.* below, M. P. iv. 219.

Bent, *s.* grassy slope; Bente, *dat.* A 1981.

Berafte, *pt. s.* robbed of, M. P. v. 87. See Bereve, Bireve.

Berd, *s.* beard, A 332; *make a berd*, outwit, A 4096.

Bere, *s.* the constellations Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, H. F. 1004; pillow, T. ii. 1638; bear, L. 1214; bier, M. P. ii. 105; head-sheet, pillow-case, M. P. iii. 254.

Bere, *v.* bear, carry, B 3564; transport, F 119; to carry about, F 148; Bereth, *pr. s.* B 2091;

Berth, *in phr.* sickly berth = take with ill will, dislike, E 625; Berth hir on hond, bears false witness against her, B 620; Ber, *pt. s.* bore, B 722.

Bereve, *v.* rob of; *me wo bereve*, rob me of woe, M. P. vi. 12. See **Berafte**.

Berie, *v.* bury, C 884.

Beringe, *s.* bearing, behavior, B 2022.

Berke, *v.* bark; Borken, *pp.* shrieked, Bo. I. p. v. 2.

Berm, *s.* barm, *i.e.* yeast, G 813.

Bern, Berne, *s.* barn, B 3759; C 397.

Berth, *pr. s.* beareth, L. 298.

Beryle, *s.* beryl, H. F. 1184.

Besaunt-wight, weighing a bezant, R. 1106.

Besette, *v.* bestow, M. P. iii. 772; 1 *pt. s.* employed, M. P. iii. 1096; Beset, *pp.* bestowed, M. P. iii. 863; set, employed, M. P. v. 598; Besette, *v.* place, dispose, use, employ, L. 1069; *pt. s.* disposed of, L. 2558.

Beseye, *pp.* beseen; *wel beseye*, well beseen, well provided, M. P. iii. 829.

Beshende, *v.* bring to ruin, L. 2696.

Besinesse, *s.* task, M. P. iii. 1156; labor, M. P. v. 86.

Bespreynt, *pp.* sprinkled, bedewed, M. P. ii. 10.

Bestowed me weel, given me good fortune, M. P. vi. 37.

Besy, *adj.* anxious, M. P. v. 89; busy, eager, active, L. 103. See **Bisy**.

Besyde, beside; *ther besyde*, beside that place, M. P. iii. 1316.

Besyed hem, *pt. pl.* busied, occupied themselves, M. P. v. 192.

Bet, *adj. comp.* better, M. P. x. 47; H. F. 108.

Bet, *adv.* better, M. P. iii. 668; quickly, M. P. iii. 136; faster, L. 1213.

Betake, 1 *pr. s.* deliver, intrust, L. 2297.

Bete, *v.* amend, M. P. vi. 78.

Bete, *pp.* beaten, H. F. 1150; Beten, B 1732.

Bete, *v.* kindle, A 2253; Betten, *pt. pl.* kindled, G 518.

Beth, *imp. pl.* be, M. P. i. 134; *pr. pl.* are, B 2350. See **Be**.

Bethenke, 1 *pr. s. bethenke me*, bethink myself, consider, M. P. iii. 698.

Betid, *pp.* happened, H. F. 384.

Betraising, *s.* betrayal, L. 2460.

Betraysed, *pt.* s. betrayed, M. P. iii. 1120.

Bewrye, *v.* betray, M. P. v. 348.

Beye, *v.* buy, C 845. See **Bye**.

Bibbed, *pp.* drunk, A 4162.

Bible, *s.* book, H. F. 1334; G 857.

Bi-bledde, *pp.* bloodied, A 2002.

Bicched bones, *s. pl.* dice, C 656.

Bi-clappe, *ger.* to clasp, ensnare, G 9.

Bidaffed, *pp.* befooled, E 1191.

Bidde, *v.* to bid, F 327; *pp.* bidden, commanded, B 440.

Biddinge, *pr. pt.* praying, G 140.

Bidelve, *v.*; Bidolven, *pp.* buried, Bo. V. p. i. 91.

Biden, *pp. of* Byde.

Bifalle, *pr. s. subj. impers.* shall befall, M. P. viii. 1; *pr. s. subj.* may befall, I 68; *pp.* befallen, B 726; Bifalleth, *pr. s.* happens, E 449; Bifel, *pt. s.* it came to pass, F 42; Bifil, B 3613; Bifelle, *pt. s. subj.* were to befall, E 136.

Biforn, *adv.* before, B 704; before, in anticipation, B 1668; beforehand, B 1184; of old time, F 551; Bifore, first, E 446.

Biforn, *prep.* before, B 997; C 665; in front of, G 680; Biforen, B 3553.

Biforn-hond, *adv.* beforehand, G 1317.

Bigamye, *s.* bigamy, M. P. vii. 153.

Bigan, *pt. s.* began, B 98, 1883.

Bigonne, *pp.* begun, L. 229. See **Began**.

Bigoon, *pp.* begone, clothed, R. 943.

Bigyle, *v.* to beguile, deceive, E 252.

Bigyleres, *pl.* beguilers, I 299.

Bigyns, *s. pl.* béguines, R. 6861.

Bihate, *v.* hate; *pp.* Bo. III. m. iv. 7.

Biheste, *s.* promise, B 37; F 698.

Bihete, *v.* promise; 2 *pr. s.* dost promise, Bo. IV. p. ii. 2; 1 *pr. s.* I promise, G 707. See **Bihote**.

Bihetinge, *s.* promising, Bo. II. p. viii. 18.

Biholde, *pp.* beheld, G 179.

Bihote, *v.* promise, A 1854.

Bihove, *s.* profit, R. 1092.

Bihovely, *adj.* advantageous, T. ii. 261.

Bijaped, *pp.* tricked, A 1585.

Biker, *s.* quarrel, L. 2661.

Biknowe, *v.* acknowledge, B 886; **I am biknowen** = I acknowledge, Bo. III. p. x. 98.

Bilden, *ger.* to build, H. F. 1133; Bilt, *pt. s.* built, H. F. 1135; *pp.* built, M. P. i. 183.

Bilder, *s. as adj.* builder, used for building, M. P. v. 176.

Bile, *s.* beak, B 4051.

Bileve, *s.* belief, faith, L. 2109; G 63.

Bileve, *v.* to remain, stay behind, F 583.

Bileveth, *imp. pl.* believe ye, G 1047.

Bille, *s.* bill, petition, M. P. i. 59, 110.

Bimene, *v.* bemoan, R. 2667.

Binime, *v.* take away, Bo. IV. p. iii. 40; Binemen, *pr. pl.* Bo. III. p. iii. 74; Bi-nomen, *pp.* taken away, Bo. III. p. iii. 79.

Biraft. See **Bireve**.

Bireve, *v.* bereave, B 3359; take away, G 482; Birafte, *pt. s.* bereft, took away, B 3386.

Biseged, *pp.* besieged, B 3514.

Biseke, *v.* beseech, B 3174; Bisekinge, beseeching, E 178, 592.

Bisemare, *s.* abusiveness, A 3965.

Bisette, *pt. s.* employed, A 279.

Biseye, *pp.* displayed, made apparent; *yvel b.*, ill-looking, E 965; *richely b.*, rich-looking, splendid, E 984.
Bishet, *pp.* shut up, T. iii. 602.
Bisie, *v.* to trouble, busy; *bisie me*, employ myself, G 758.
Bisily, *adv.* busily, F 88.
Bisinesse, *s.* diligence, E 1008; busy endeavor, G 24; Bisynesse, F 642. See **Businesse**.
Bi-smokede, *adj. pl.* dirtied with smoke, Bo. I. p. i. 33.
Bismotered, *pp.* soiled, A 76.
Bistad, *pp.* hard bestead, greatly imperilled, B 649.
Bistrood, *pt. s.* bestrode, B 2093.
Bisy, *adj.* busy, attentive, F 509. See **Besy**.
Bisyde, *prep.* beside, E 777, 1105; F 374.
Bit, *pr. s.* bids, F 291.
Bitake, 1 *pr. s.* commend, commit, E 161; Bitook, *pt. s.* delivered, gave, committed (to the charge of), G 541; Bitaken, *pp.* Bo. III. m. ii. 52.
Biteche, *pr. s.* commit to, B 2114.
Bithinke, 1 *pr. s.* bethink, M. P. i. 121.
Bitid, *pp.* befallen, B 1949. See **Bityde**.
Bitit, betideth, T. ii. 48.
Bitokneth, *pr. s.* betokens, signifies, B 3942.
Bitook. See **Bitake**.
Bitore, *s.* bittern, D 972.
Bitrayed, Bitraisshed, Bitrasshed, *pp.* betrayed, B 3570; R. 1648; R. 3910.
Bitrent, *pr. s.* clasps, encircles, T. iii. 1231.
Bitwixen, *prep.* between, C 832; Bitwixe, B 3830; Bitwix, F 317.
Bityde, *v.* befall, E 79; happen, arrive, B 3730; *pr. s. subj.* may betide, E 306; *bityde what bityde*, let that happen that may, whatever may happen, B 2064.
Bitydinge, *s.* an event, Bo. V. p. i. 42.
Bitymes, *adv.* betimes, soon, G 1008.
Biwailen, *v.* to bewail, lament, B 26; Biwaille, B 3952; Biwailed, *pp.* E 530.
Biwreye, *v.* to bewray, unfold, reveal, B 3219; Biwreyen, betray, G 150; Biwreyest, disclosest, B 773.
Bladdre, *s.* bladder, G 439.
Blake, *adj. pl.* black, G 557.
Blakeberied, *a.* a-blackberrying, *i.e.* a-wandering at will, astray, C 406.
Blaked, *pp.* blackened, rendered black, B 3321.
Blankmanger, *s.* blanc-mange, A 387.
Blasen, *v.* blow, H. F. 1802.
Blaspheme, *s.* blasphemy, M. P. xvi. 15.
Blaste, *v.* blow a trumpet, H. F. 1866.
Blaunche, *adj.* white, T. i. 916.
Blaundisshinge, *pret. pt. as adj.* bewitching, Bo. III. m. xii. 25; Blaundissinge, flattering, Bo. II. p. i. 34.
Bleched, *pp.* bleached, M. P. ix. 45.
Blemished, *pp.* injured, Bo. I. p. iv. 348.
Blent, *pr. s.* blinds, M. P. v. 600; *pp.* blinded, M. P. xv. 18.
Blere, *v.* blind, A 4049.
Blered, *adj.* bleared, G 730.
Blesseth hir, *pr. s.* crosses herself, B 449.
Bleve, *v.* remain, T. iii. 623.
Blew, *adj.* blue, M. P. iii. 340; Blewe, *adj. pl.* blue, livid, pale; *with teres blewe*, blue with weeping, M. P. iv. 8; Blew, *adj. as s.* blue, blue clothing, M. P. xxi. 7. See **Blo**.
Bleyne, *s.* blain, R. 553.
Blinne, *v.* stop, cease, R. 6611; G 1171.
Blisful, *adj.* blessed, B 845; happy, merry, E 844, 1121.
Blisful, *adv.* joyously, M. P. v. 689.
Blisfulnesse, *s.* happiness, Bo. II. p. iv. 127.
Blisse, *v.* bless, E 553.
Blo, *adj.* blue, ash-colored, smoke-colored, H. F. 1647. See **Blew**.
Blondren. See **Blundreth**.
Blood, *s.* progeny, offspring, E 632.
Blosmes, *s. pl.* blossoms, L. 143, 157.
Blosmy, *adj.* blossomy, covered with blossoms, M. P. v. 183.
Blowe, *pp.* blown, filled out with wind, G 440.
Blundreth, *pr. s.* runs heedlessly, G 1414; Blondren, 1 *pr. pl.* we fall into confusion, we confuse ourselves, become mazed, G 670.
Blynde with, *ger.* to blind (the priest) with, G 1151.
Blythe, *adj.* merry, of good cheer, L. 647.
Blyve, *adv.* quickly, M. P. iii. 152; L. 60; *as blyve*, as quickly as may be, as soon as possible, M. P. iii. 248.
Bobance, *s.* presumption, boast, D 569.
Boch, *s.* botch, pustule, Bo. III. p. iv. 15.
Bocher, *s.* butcher, A 2025.
Bode, *s.* foreboding, token, omen, M. P. v. 343.
Bode, *s.* abiding, delay, M. P. vii. 119.
Bode, *v.* proclaim; *pr. s.* heralds, Bo. IV. m. vi. 19.
Boden, *pp.* ordered, L. 366; *pp. of* Bede.
Body, *s.* principal subject, E 42; my body, myself, B 1185; *pl.* metallic bodies (metals), answering to celestial bodies (planets), G 820.
Boes, *pr. s.* it behoves, A 4027.
Boght, *pp.* bought, M. P. iv. 168; Boghten, 2 *pt. pl.* bought, L. 258.
Boist, *s.* box, C 307; Boistes, *pl.* H. F. 2129.
Boistous, *adj.* rough, H 211.
Boistously, *adv.* loudly, E 791.
Bokeler, *s.* buckler, A 112, 3266.
Bokes, *pl.* books, B 3499.
Boket, *s.* bucket, A 1533.
Bolas, *s.* bullace, R. 1377.
Bolde, *v.* grow bold, M. P. v. 144.

Bole armoniak, Armenian clay, G 790.
Boles, *pl.* bulls, M. P. iv. 86; L. 1432.
Bolle, *s.* a bowl, G 1210.
Bon, *adj.* good, H. F. 1022.
Bond, *pt. s.* bound, H. F. 1590; **Bonde,** *pp.* bound, in slavery, M. P. xvii. 32.
Bond, *s.* a band, F 131.
Bone, *s.* prayer, request, M. P. iii. 129; request, L. 1596; petition, L. 2340.
Boon, *s.* bone, M. P. iii. 940; B 3090.
Boor, *s.* boar, L. 980; B 3299.
Boost, *s.* noise, *hence* boast, L. 267; boast, pride, B 3289. See **Bost.**
Boot, *pt. s.* bit, B 3791.
Boot, *s.* boat, E 1424.
Boras, *s.* borax, A 630; G 790.
Bord, *s.* board, plank, M. P. iii. 74; table, B 430; board, *i.e.* meals, G 1017.
Bordels, *s. pl.* brothels, I 885.
Bordillers, *s. pl.* keepers of brothels, R. 7034.
Bore, *pp.* born, M. P. iii. 1301; Bore, *pp.* born, E 401; borne, carried, F 178; Born, borne, E 444; carried, F 176; worn, F 43.
Bore, Boren, *pp. of* Bere.
Borel, *adj.* coarse, common, B 3145.
Bores. See **Boor.**
Borneth, *pr. s.* burnishes, T. i. 327.
Borowe, *s. dat.* pledge; *to borowe,* in pledge, for surety, M. P. iv. 205.
Borwe, *v.* borrow, M. P. vi. 10; B 105.
Borwe, *s.* pledge; *to borwe,* in pledge, L. 2105.
Bosarde, *s.* buzzard, R. 4033.
Bost, *s.* boasting, M. P. iv. 37; noise, outcry, L. 887; pride, swelling, G 441. See **Boost.**
Bote, *s.* remedy, M. P. iii. 38; cure, M. P. xxii. 45; safety, salvation, B 1656; relief, G 1481; *doth bote,* gives the remedy for, M. P. v. 276; *for bote ne bale,* for good, nor for ill, M. P. iii. 227; boot, help, L. 1076.
Botel, *s.* bottle (of hay), H 14.
Boteler, *s.* butler, H. F. 592.
Boterflye, *s.* butterfly, B 3080.
Bothe, *adj. pl.* both, M. P. iii. 1068; *your bothes,* of both of you, M. P. i. 83.
Bother, *gen.* of both, T. iv. 168.
Botme, *s. dat.* bottom, G 1321.
Botomlees, *adj.* bottomless, L. 1584.
Botoun, *s.* bud, R. 1721, 2960.
Bougerons, *s. pl.* sodomites, R. 7022.
Bought, Boughte, *pt. s.* bought; *boughte agayn,* redeemed, C 766.
Bouk, *s.* body, A 2746.
Bountee, *s.* bounty, M. P. ii. 38; goodness, M.P. xxiii. 5; goodness, kindness, devotedness, L. 522.
Bour, *s.* inner room, B 4022.
Bourde, *s.* jest, H 81.
Bourded, *pp.* jested, M. P. v. 589.
Boures, *s. pl.* bowers, M. P. v. 304.
Bowes, *pl.* boughs, M. P. v. 183.
Box, *s.* boxwood, L. 866.
Box, *s.* blow, L. 1388.
Boxtre, *s.* box-tree, M. P. v. 178.
Boydekins, *s. pl.* poniards, lit. bodkins, B 3892.
Bracer, *s.* arm-guard, A 111.
Brade, *adj.* broad, R. 4200.
Bragot, *s.* ale and mead, A 3261.
Brak, *pt. s.* broke, M. P. iii. 71; B 288. *Pt. s. of* Breken.
Branched, *adj.* full of branches, F 159.
Brast, Braste. See **Breste.**
Braun, *s.* muscle, A 546.
Brayd, *s.* start, L. 1166.
Brayde, *pt. s.* took hastily, H. F. 1678; **Brayd,** *pp.* started, gone suddenly, M. P. vii. 124. See **Breyde.**
Brede, *s.* roast meat, H. F. 1222.
Brede, *s.* breadth, M. P. iii. 956; B 3350.
Breden, *ger.* to breed, to arise, L. 1156.
Breech, *s.* breeches, B 2049; C 948.
Breed, *s.* bread, B 3624; F 614.
Breke, *pr. s. subj.* break, M. P. iv. 242; **Brak,** *pt. s.* M. P. iii. 71; **Breke,** *v.* break, C 936; *br. his day,* fail to pay at the appointed time, G 1040; **Breke,** *imp. s.* interrupt, I 24.
Brekers, *s. pl.* breakers, transgressors, M. P. v. 78.
Brekke, *s.* break, flaw, defect, M. P. iii. 940.
Breme, *adj.* fierce, T. iv. 184; *adv.* A 1699.
Bren, *s.* bran, A 4053.
Brend, *pp.* brent, brend, R. 1109.
Brenne, *v.* burn, M. P. xvii. 18; **Brende,** *pt. s.* burnt, M. P. i. 90; was burnt, H. F. 163; was set on fire, H. F. 537; *pt. pl.* caught fire, H. F. 954; **Brent,** *pp.* burnt, M. P. vii. 115; **Brente,** *pt. pl.* L. 731; **Brenninge,** *pres. pt.* burning, M. P. i. 90; **Brend,** *pp.* burnt, L. (A) 292; **Brennen,** *pr. pl.* burn, L. 2610.
Brenning, *s.* burning, M. P. iv. 133.
Breres, *s. pl.* briars, R. 3006.
Brest, *s.* breast, E 617.
Breste, *v.* burst, break, E 1169; *ger.* to burst, H. F. 2018; Brast, *pt. s.* broke, M. P. iii. 1193; Braste, *pl.* B 671.
Bret-ful, *adj.* brimful, H. F. 2123; A 687.
Bretherhed, *s.* brotherhood, religious order, A 511.
Breve, *adj.* brief, R. 2350.
Brew, *pt. s.* brewed, contrived, B 3575.
Breyde, *v.* start suddenly, awake, F 477; Breyde, *pt. s.* started, went (out of his wits), B 3728; drew, B 837.
Brid, *s.* bird, L. 1757; **Briddes,** *pl.* young of birds, M. P. v. 192.
Brige, *s.* quarrel, B 2870.
Brighte, *adv.* brightly, B 11, 2034.

Brike, *s.* a perilous state, ruin, downfall, B 3580.
Brimme, *s.* brim of a lake, water, L. 2451.
Bringen, *v.* bring, B 3623.
Brinkes, *pl.* sides, banks, H. F. 803.
Brinne. See **Brenne.**
Brocage, *s.* brokery, jobbery, A 3375.
Broche, *s.* any precious small ornament, here used of a bracelet, M. P. iv. 245.
Brode, *adj. pl.* broad, thick, B 3448. See **Brood.**
Brode, *adv.* far and wide, H. F. 1683; broadly, wide awake, G 1420.
Broken, *pp.* ship-wrecked, L. 1487.
Broken. See **Breke.**
Brokkinge, *pr. pt.* warbling, A 3377.
Bromes, *pl.* broom (bushes so called), H. F. 1226.
Brond, *s.* brand, torch, L. 2252; firebrand, B 3224; Bronde, *dat.* a piece of hot metal on the anvil, B 2095.
Brood, *adj.* broad, thick, large, F 82. See **Brode.**
Brosten, *pt. pl.* burst, M. P. iv. 96; *pp.* broken, L. 1300. See **Breste, Brast.**
Brotel, *adj.* brittle, frail; fickle, L. 1855; Brutel, Bo. II. p. v. 6.
Brotelnesse, *s.* fickleness, M. P. x. 63.
Brouded, *pp.* embroidered, B 3659.
Brouke, *v.* enjoy, use, B 4490; 1 *pr. s. subj.* (optative), may I have the use of, H. F. 263; Brouken, *pr. pl. subj.* may they enjoy, profit by, L. 194.
Browdinge, *s.* embroidery, A 2498.
Brutel. See **Brotel.**
Bryberyes, *s. pl.* rascalities, D 1367.
Brydel, *s.* bridle, M. P. vii. 184; F 340.
Brydeleth, *pr. s.* bridles, M. P. iv. 41.
Buk, *s.* buck, M. P. v. 195; Bukke, B 1946; Blow the bukkes horn, have trouble for nothing, A 3387.
Bulle, *s.* papal bull, C 909.
Bulte, *v.* sift, B 4430.
Bulte, *pt. s.* built, A 1548.
Burdoun, *s.* cudgel, R. 3401; bass, A 673.
Burel, *adj.* coarse, common, D 1872.
Buriels, *s. pl.* burial-places, *i.e.* the catacombs, G 186.
Burned, *pp.* burnished, polished, H. F. 1387.
Burnettes, *pl.* dresses of brown, R. 4756.
Businesse, *s.* business, industry, G 5. See **Bisinesse.**
Busk, *s.* bush, R. 54; *pl.* A 1579.
But, *conj.* unless, M. P. ii. 82; but and, but if, L. 1790; but-if, unless, M. P. iii. 1023.
Buxom, *adj.* obedient, B 1432.
Buxomly, *adv.* obediently, E 186.
Buxumnesse, *s.* yielding, submission, M. P. xiii. 15.
By, *prep.* in the case of, with reference to, M. P. iv. 263; concerning, H. F. 742; with respect to, about, L. 271; *by the morwe*, at morn, L. 49.
By, *adv.* by, at hand, L. 2091.
By, *v.* to buy; *go by*, go to buy, G 1294. See **Beye.**
By and by, *adv.* one after another, in order, L. 304; side by side, in order, A 1011.
Bye, *pr. pl. subj.* buy, M. P. xviii. 26.
Byen, *pr. pl.* buy, R. 2452.
Byer, *s.* buyer, R. 5928.
Byforn, *prep.* before, H. F. 60.
Bynde, *v.* bind, enthral, M. P. iv. 249; Bynt him, *pr. s.* bindeth himself, M. P. iv. 47; Bynt her, M. P. iv. 48.
Byte, *v.* bite, B 3634; to sting, F 513; to cut deeply, F 158.
Bytinge, *s.* wound, Bo. III. m. vii. 7.
By-twixe, *adv.* between, As. ii. 5.

C.

Caas. See **Cas.**
Cable, *s.* cord, M. P. xviii. 33.
Cacche, *v.* catch, M. P. iii. 781; G 11.
Caitif, *s.* wretch, M. P. i. 124.
Cake, *s.* loaf, C 322.
Cakelinge, *s.* cackling, M. P. v. 562.
Calcening, *s.* calcination, G 771.
Calcinacioun, *s.* calcination, G 804.
Calculinge, *s.* reckoning, T. i. 71.
Calden, 2 *pt. pl.* called, M. P. vii. 251.
Caleweys, *s. pl.* pears, R. 7043.
Calle, *s.* head-dress, D 1018. See **Howve**
Cam, *pt. s.* came, F 81.
Camaille, *s.* camel, E 1196.
Camelyne, *s.* camel's hair, R. 7367.
Camuse, *adj.* flat, A 3934.
Can, 1 *pr. s.* know, am able to say, M. P. v. 14. See **Coude.**
Candel, *s.* torch, light, M. P. iv. 7.
Canel-boon, *s.* collar-bone (lit. channel-bone, with reference to the depression in the neck behind the collar-bone), M. P. iii. 943.
Canelle, *s.* cinnamon, R. 1370.
Canevas, *s.* canvas, G 939.
Cankedort, *s.* state of suffering, T. ii. 1752.
Canon, *s.* the 'Canon,' the title of a book by Avicenna, C 890.
Canstow, *for* Canst thou, B 632.
Cantel, *s.* portion, A 3008.
Cape, *pr. pl.* gape, T. v. 1133.
Capel, *s.* horse, nag, H 64.
Capitayn, *s.* captain, C 582.
Capoun, *s.* capon, L. 1389.
Carbuncle, *s.* carbuncle-stone, H. F. 1363.
Cardiacle, *s.* pain about the heart, C 313.
Care, *s.* care, ill-luck, M. P. v. 363; anxiety, trouble, B 514.

Care, *v.* feel anxiety, E 1212.
Careful, *adj.* full of trouble, M. P. vi. 44.
Careyne, *s.* carrion, dead body, M. P. v. 177.
Carf, *pt. s.* carved, cut, B 3647.
Carie, *v.* to carry, E 585; Carien, *pr. pl.* carry, B 1814; Carieden, *pt. pl.* carried, G 1219.
Carl, *s.* churl, country fellow, C 717.
Carmes, *s. pl.* Carmelites, R. 7462.
Carole, *s.* carol, L. 687; singing dance, R. 744.
Carole, *v.* dance round singing, M. P. iii. 849.
Carpe, *v.* chatter, A 194.
Carrik, *s.* ship of burden, D 1688.
Cart, *s.* chariot, H. F. 943.
Cartere, *s.* charioteer, Bo. V. p. iv. 110.
Cart-hors, *pl.* chariot-horses, H. F. 944.
Cas, *s.* chance, H. F. 1052; case, affair, L. 1558; adventure, L. 1630; mischance, L. 1056; case, occasion, B 36; circumstance, state, condition, B 123; chance, hap, E 316; *to deyen in the cas*, though death were the result, E 859.
Cas, *s.* case for arrows, quiver, L. 982.
Cast, *s.* plan, H. F. 1178.
Caste, 1 *pt. s.* cast, M. P. v. 172; *pr. s. subj.* let (him) cast, M. P. xx. 4; Casteth, *pr. s.* considers, G 1414; *refl.* casts himself, devotes himself, G 738; Casten, *pr. pl.* cast about, debate, B 212; Cast, *pp.* cunningly devised, M. P. ii. 26.
Castel, *s.* castle, M. P. iii. 1318, 1322.
Casuelly, *adv.* by chance, H. F. 679.
Catel, *s.* chattels, A 373.
Caughte, *pt. s.* pulled, L. 1854; took, conceived, E 619; Caught, *pp.* obtained, E 1110.
Cause, *s.* reason, B 252; *cause why*, the reason why is this, E 2435.
Causeles, *adv.* without reason, M. P. xxii. 32.
Causen, *pr. pl.* cause, F 452.
Cave, *s.* used to translate astrological term 'puteus,' M. P. iv. 119; cave, L. 1225.
Caytif, *s.* wretch, wretched or unfortunate man, B 3269.
Celebrable, *adj.* celebrated, Bo. IV. m. vii. 35.
Celerer, *s.* keeper of a cellar, B 3126.
Celestials, *adj. pl.* of heaven, heavenly, H. F. 460.
Ceptre, *s.* sceptre, M. P. v. 256; B 3334.
Cercle, *s.* circle, H. F. 791; sphere, M. P. xvi. 9.
Cered, *pp. as adj.* waxed, G 808.
Cerial ook, *s.* holm oak, A 2290.
Cerimonies, *s. pl.* ceremonious acts, acts of courtship, F 515.
Ceriously, *adv.* minutely, with full details, B 185.
Certein, *adj.* a certain quantity of; *c. gold*, a stated sum of money, B 242; *c. tresor*, a quantity of treasure, B 442; Certeyn, a certain sum, a fixed quantity, G 776; Certeins, *pl.* certain, Bo. V. p. v. 125.
Certes, *adv.* certainly, M. P. i. 28; G 1478.
Certeyn, *adv.* certainly, M. P. i. 169; **In certayn**, certainly, T. iv. 908.
Ceruce, *s.* white lead, A 630.
Cese, *v.* put an end to, M. P. iv. 11. See **Cesse**.
Cesse, *v.* cease, B 1066.
Cetewale, *s.* either (1) zedoary, or (2) the herb valerian, B 1951. See **Setewale**.
Ceynt, *s.* girdle, A 3235.
Chaced, *pp.* chased, driven away, M. P. xi. 14.
Chaffare, *s.* merchandise; *hence*, matter, subject, E 2438.
Chaffare, *ger.* to trade, barter, deal, traffic, B 139.
Chaires, *s. pl.* thrones, Bo. IV. m. ii. 4.
Chalaundre, *s.* sort of lark, R. 914.
Chalaunged, *pt. s.* arrogated, Bo. II. p. vi. 39.
Chalk-stoon, *s.* a piece of chalk, G 1207.
Chalons, *s.* coverlets from Chalons, A 4140.
Chamberere, *s.* maidservant, chambermaid, E 819.
Champartye, *s.* partnership, A 1949.
Chanon, *s.* canon, G 573; Chanoun, G 972.
Chapeleyne, *s.* nun who said minor offices, A 164.
Chapitres, *pl.* chapters, M. P. v. 32.
Chapmanhode, *s.* trade, barter, B 143.
Chapmen, *s. pl.* traders, merchants, B 135.
Char, *s.* car, chariot, M. P. vii. 24; F 671.
Charbocle, *s.* carbuncle (a precious stone), B 2061.
Charge, *s.* load, burden, M. P. vii. 32; a heavy thing, H. F. 746; importance, M. P. iii. 894; responsibility, E 163; weight, L. 620; consequence, L. 2383; *of that no ch.*, for that no matter, it is of no importance, G 749.
Charge, *v.* load, L. 2151.
Chargeant, *adj.* burdensome, B 2433.
Charite, *s.* charity, M. P. iii. 642.
Charmeresses, *fem. pl.* workers with charms, H. F. 1261.
Chartres, *s. pl.* agreements, T. iii. 340.
Chasted, *pp.* chastened, taught, F 491. See **Chastyse**.
Chasteleyne, *s.* chatelaine, R. 3740.
Chasteyn, *s.* chestnut, A 2921.
Chastisinge, *s.* chastening, M. P. i. 129.
Chastyse, *v.* chasten, M. P. i. 39; *imp. s.* M. P. i. 129. See **Chasted**.
Chaunce, *s.* chance, incident, M. P. iii. 1285; hap, destiny, M. P. iii. 1113; luck, G 593; 'chance,' a technical term in the game of hazard, C 653.
Chaunge, *s.* change, exchange, F 535.
Chaunte-pleure, title of a song upon grief following joy, M. P. vii. 320.
Chaunterie, *s.* endowment for singing masses for the dead, A 510.
Chayer, *s.* throne, Bo. I. m. v. 3.
Cheef, *adj.* chief, M. P. iii. 910, 911.
Cheek, *s.* cheek, *i.e.* cheekbone, B 3228.

Chees, 1 *pt. s.* chose, M. P. iii. 791; *imp. s.* choose, L. 1449; Cheest, *pr. s.* chooseth, M. P. v. 623. See **Chese**.
Cheeste, *s.* strife, I 556.
Chek, *s. as int.* check (at chess), M. P. iii. 659.
Chekkere, *s.* chess-board, M. P. iii. 660.
Chelaundre, R. 81. See **Chalaundre**.
Chepe, *s.* a time of cheapness, H. F. 1974.
Cherche, *s.* a church, G 546.
Chere, *s.* cheer, look, manner, M. P. iii. 545; kindly greeting, M. P. iv. 146; face, countenance, L. 64; appearance, L. 2079; *doth him chere*, makes him good cheer, L. 2452; entertainment, B 180; show, E 678; kindly expression, E 1112.
Cherete, *s.* dearness, R. 3516.
Cherl, *s.* churl, L. 136; C 289.
Cheryce, *v.* cherish, M. P. ix. 52; Cherissheth, *imp. pl.* cherish ye, F 353.
Ches, *s.* chess, M. P. iii. 619.
Chese, *v.* choose, M. P. v. 399; Chesen, *v.* M. P. xxii. 86; Cheseth, *imp. pl.* M. P. iv. 17; Chees, *pt. s.* chose, B 3706; Chose, *pp.* chosen, M. P. iii. 1004.
Chesinge, *s.* choosing, choice, E 162.
Cheste, *s.* coffin, E 29.
Chevalrye, *s.* chivalry, knighthood, H. F. 1340.
Chevauche, *s.* swift course (lit. a ride), M. P. iv. 144.
Chevauchee. See **Chivachee**.
Cheve, *v.*; *in phr.* yvel mote he cheve = ill may he end, *or* ill may he thrive, G 1225.
Chevered, *pp.* shivered, R. 1732.
Chevesaile, *s.* collar, R. 1082.
Chevisaunce, *s.* borrowing, L. 2434.
Chevise, *v.* procure, R. 6425; *refl.* accomplished her desire, M. P. iv. 289.
Cheyne, *s.* chain, M. P. xi. 16.
Chiche, *adj.* parsimonious, R. 5588.
Chideresse, *s.* scold, R. 4266.
Chiertee, *s.* dearness, B 1526; affection, F 881.
Chike, *s.* chick, R. 541.
Chiknes, *pl.* chickens, A 380.
Child, *s.* child, a term of address to a young man, B 2000.
Childhede, *s. dat.* childhood, B 1691.
Chilindre, *s.* pocket sun-dial, B 1396.
Chimbe, *s.* rim of the barrel, A 3895.
Chirche, *s.* church, A 460.
Chirche-hawes, *s. pl.* churchyards, I 801.
Chirketh, *pr. pt.* rustling, Bo. I. m. vi. 11; *pr. s.* twitters, D 1804.
Chirking, *s.* murmuring, A 2004.
Chirkinges, *pl.* shriekings, cries, H. F. 1943.
Chit, *pr. s.* chides, G 921.
Chiteren, *v.* chatter, prattle, G 1397.
Chivachee, *s.* feat of horsemanship, H 50.
Chivachye, *s.* expedition, A 85.
Chivalrye, *s.* chivalry, company of knights, B 235; troops of horse, cavalry, B 3871.
Chogh, *s.* chough, M. P. v. 345.
Choppen, *v.* strike downwards, knock, H. F. 1824.
Chose. See **Chese**.
Choys, *s.* choice, M. P. v. 406; E 170.
Chyde, *v.* chide, complain, F 649.
Chyning, *adj.* gaping, yawning, Bo. I. p. 45.
Ciclatoun, *s.* a costly kind of thin cloth, B 1924.
Ciergis, *s. pl.* tapers, R. 6248.
Cink, *num.* cinque, five, C 653.
Cipres, *s.* cypress, M. P. v. 179; Ciprees, B 1931.
Citee, *s.* city, F 46.
Citezein, *s.* citizen, H. F. 930.
Citole, *s.* stringed instrument of music, A 1959.
Citrinacioun, *s.* citronizing, the turning to the color of citron, a process in alchemy, G 816.
Clamb, *pt. s.* climbed, B 1987; Clamben, *pt. pl.* climbed, H. F. 2151.
Claperes, *s. pl.* burrows, R. 1405.
Clappe, *s.* thunderclap, H. F. 1040.
Clappe, *pr. pl.* chatter, prattle, G 965; Clappeth, *imp. pl.* make a constant clatter, keep chattering, E 1200; *pr. s.* talks fast, B 3971.
Clapping, *s.* chatter, idle talk, E 999.
Clarioning, *s.* the music of the clarion, H. F. 1242.
Clarioun, *s.* clarion, H. F. 1240.
Clarre, Clarree, *s.* wine mixed with honey and spices, and afterwards strained till it was clear, M. P. ix. 16; A 1471.
Clause, *s.* sentence, B 251.
Clawe, *v.* rub, scratch, A 4326; D 940.
Cled, *pp.* clad, furnished, M. P. iii. 252.
Cleernesse, *s.* clearness, brightness, glory, G 403.
Clene, *adj.* clean, pure, unmixed, B 1183.
Clene, *adv.* entirely, M. P. iii. 423; F 626.
Clepe, *v.* call, name, M. P. iii. 810; Cleped, *pp.* M. P. i. 159; Clepen, *v.* call, F 332; Clepeth, *pr. s.* calls, F 382; *men clepe*, people call, E 115.
Clere, *adj.* clear, noble, pure, H. F. 1575; *pl.* noble, M. P. v. 77; clear, beautiful, L. 249; clear, bright, E 779.
Clergeon, *s.* a chorister-boy, B 1693.
Clergial, *adj.* clerkly, learned, G 752.
Clerk, *s.* clerk, learned man, student, E 1.
Cleve, *v.* adhere; *pr. pl.* Bo. III. p. xi. 127.
Cleve, *v.* cleave, cut, split, L. 751; Cloven, *pp.* L. 738.
Clew, 1 *pt. s.* rubbed, H. F. 1702. *Pt. t. of* Clawen.
Clew, *s.* clew, L. 2140.
Cley, *s.* clay, G 897.

Clif, *s.* cliff, L. 1497; Clyves, *pl.* L. 1470; Cliffes, cliffs, rocks, M. P. iii. 161.
Clifte, *s.* chink, Bo. IV. p. iv. 334; cleft, L. 740.
Cliket, *s.* latch-key, E 2046.
Clinke, **Clinken**, *v.* to ring, sound, clink, tingle, B 1186; C 664.
Clinking, *s.* tinkling, B 3984.
Clippe, *v.* clip, cut, B 3257.
Clippeth, *pr. s.* embraces, L. 876.
Clipsy, *adj.* eclipsed, obscure, R. 5349.
Clobbed, *adj.* clubbed, B 3088.
Cloisterer, *s.* a cloister-monk, B 3129.
Clokke, *s.* clock; *of the clock*, by the clock, B 14.
Clom, *interj.* hush, A 3638.
Clomb, 1 *pt. s.* climbed, M. P. iv. 271; Clamben, *pt. pl.* H. F. 2151.
Clombe. See **Clymben**.
Cloos, *adj.* secret, T. ii. 1534; close, secret, G 1369.
Clos, *s.* a pen, enclosure, B 4550.
Close, *v.* close, M. P. iii. 873.
Closer, *s.* enclosure, R. 4069.
Clote-leef, *s.* a leaf of the burdock or clote-bur, G 577.
Clothered, *pp.* clotted, A 2745.
Clout, *s.* a cloth, C 736; Cloutes, *pl.* cloths, portions of a garment, rags, C 348.
Cloven, *pp.* cleft, L. 738. See **Cleve**.
Clowe-gilofre, *s.* clove, spice, B 1952.
Clowes, *pl.* claws, H. F. 1785.
Clustred, *pp.* covered with clouds, Bo. I. m. iii. 6.
Clymben, *v.* to climb, F 106; Clymbeth, *pr. s.* B 3966; Clombe, *pp.* B 12; *were clombe*, hadst climbed, B 3592.
Clyven, *pr. pl.* cleave, keep, Bo. III. p. xi. 127.
Clyves. See **Clif**.
Coagulat, *pp.* coagulated, clotted, G 811.
Cod, *s.* bag, C 534.
Coempcioun, *s.* an imposition so called, lit. joint purchase, the buying up of the whole of any commodity in the market, Bo. I. p. iv. 101.
Cofre, *s.* coffer, coffin, M. P. v. 177; coffer, chest, L. 380; coffer, money-box, G 836.
Cogge, *s.* cock-boat, L. 1481.
Coillons, *pl.* testicles, C 952.
Cok, *s.* cock, M. P. v. 350.
Cokenay, *s.* milksop, A 4208.
Cokes, *s. pl.* cooks, C 538.
Cokewold, *s.* cuckold, A 3152.
Cokkel, *s.* cockle, *i.e.* the corn-cockle, B 1183.
Cokkes, corruption of Goddes, H 9; I 29.
Cokkow, *s.* cuckoo, M. P. v. 498.
Col-blak, *adj.* coal-black, A 2142.
Colde, *v.* grow cold, B 879; *doth myn herte colde*, makes my heart grow cold, L. 240.
Colerik, *adj.* choleric, F 51.
Coles, *s. pl.* coals, G 1114.
Col-fox, *s.* brant-fox, B 4405.
Collacioun, *s.* conference, E 325.
Collect, *s.* table of planetary motions, F 1275.
Colour, *s.* color, outward appearance, M. P. ii. 66; Coloures, *pl.* colors, pretences (a pun), F 511.
Colpons, *pl.* shreds, A 679.
Columbyn, *adj.* dove-like, E 2141.
Colver, *s.* dove, L. 2319.
Comaundour, *s.* commander, B 495.
Combred, *pp.* encumbered, Bo. III. m. x. 9.
Combre-world, *s.* useless creature, T. iv. 279.
Combust, *pp.* burnt up, T. iii. 717; As. ii. 4, 53; G 811.
Come, *s.* coming, R. 7628; G 343.
Come, *v.* come; *come therby*, come by it, acquire it, G 1395; Comestow, comest thou, L. 1887; Cometh, *pr. s. as fut.* shall come, M. P. iv. 11; Comth, *pr. s.* comes, B 407; Com, *pt. s.* came, M. P. iii. 134; Comen, *ger.* to come, M. P. v. 76; *pt. pl.* came, L. 1241; *pp.* come, B 260; *ben comen*, are come, B 1130; Coomen, *pt. pl.* came, B 1805.
Comeveden, *pt. pl.* influenced, T. iii. 17.
Comlinesse, *s.* comeliness, beauty, M. P. iii. 966.
Commaundement, *s.* command, H. F. 2021.
Commoeve, *ger.* to move, influence, Bo. IV. p. iv. 310.
Commoevinge, *s.* moving, disturbing, Bo. I. m. iv. 7.
Commune, *adj.* general, common, B 155; E 431.
Commune, *s.* the commons, E 70.
Commune, *v.* commune, converse, G 982.
Companye, *s.* companionship, M. P. iv. 219; company, B 134.
Comparisoned, *pp.* compared, Bo. II. p. vii. 129.
Compas, *s.* compass, circuit, M. P. iv. 137; a very large circle, H. F. 798; craft, contriving, H. F. 462; enclosure, continent; *tryne compas*, the threefold world, containing earth, sea, and heaven, G 45; Compace, plan, H. F. 1170.
Compasment, *s.* plotting, L. 1416.
Compassed, *pp.* enclosed, M. P. xi. 21; *pt. s.* plotted, planned, L. 1414.
Complexiouns, *pl.* the (four) temperaments, H. F. 21.
Compleyne, *v.* complain, lament, M. P. iv. 93; Compleyneth, *imp. pl.* lament ye, M. P. iv. 290.
Compleyninge, *s.* complaint, L. 1357.
Compleynt, *s.* complaint, a poem so called, M. P. ii. 43; iii. 464.
Complisshen, *v.* accomplish, Bo. IV. p. iv. 27.
Comporte, *v.* bear, T. v. 1397.
Composiciouns, *s. pl.* suitable arrangements, F 229.
Compotent, *adj.* all-powerful, Bo. V. p. vi. 59.

Compouned, *pp.* compounded, composed, H. F. 1029; As. ii. 5, 2; mingled, H. F. 2108.
Comprehende, *v.* take in (in the mind), F 223; Comprehended, *pp.* expressed in a brief saying, summed up, M. P. vii. 83.
Comunalitee, *s.* empire, Bo. IV. p. vi. 442.
Comune, *adj.* accustomed to, M. P. iii. 812; Comun profit, the good of the country, M. P. v. 47, 75.
Comunly, *adv.* commonly, E 726.
Comuntee, *s.* community, R. 5209.
Comyn, *s.* cummin, B 2045.
Conclude, *v.* draw a conclusion, B 14; include, put together, G 429; attain to a successful result, G 773.
Conclusioun, *s.* plan, M. P. xv. 11; *as in conclusioun*, after all, M. P. iv. 257; moral of a tale, L. 2723; result, successful end of an experiment, G 672; reason, F 492.
Concours, *s.* course, R. 4360.
Condicioun, *s.* condition, stipulation; *in this condicioun*, upon this condition, M. P v. 407.
Conestablerye, *s.* constable's jurisdiction, R. 4218.
Confedred, *pp.* rendered confederates, conjoined, M. P. ii. 42, 52.
Confermeth, *imp. pl.* confirm, strengthen, M. P. iv. 20.
Confiture, *s.* composition, C 862.
Confounde, *v.* destroy, M. P. i. 40; *pp.* overwhelmed, B 100; destroyed in soul, G 737.
Confus, *adj.* confused, H. F. 1517; *pp. as adj.* convicted of folly, G 463.
Congeled, *pp.* congealed, frozen, H. F. 1126.
Congeyen, *v.* dismiss, T. v. 479.
Coniecte, *v.* conjecture, R. 6928.
Conies, *s. pl.* conies, rabbits, R. 1404.
Coninges, *s. pl.* conies, R. 7044.
Conioininge, *s.* conjunction, G 95.
Conisaunce, *s.* acquaintance, R. 4668; knowledge, R. 5465.
Conne, *ger.* to be able, M. P. iii. 279; 1 *pr. pl.* know, H. F. 1265; Conne, *v.* con, learn, B 1730; 1 *pr. pl.* we can, are able, B 483; *pr. s. subj.* he may know; *al conne he*, whether he may know, G 846. See **Can**.
Conning, *s.* skill, knowledge, L. 68.
Conning, *adj.* skilful, B 3690.
Conningly, *adv.* skilfully, E 1017.
Conseil, *s.* council, B 204; counsel, B 425.
Conseileres, *pl.* councillors, L. 1550.
Conservatif, *adj.* preserving; *conservatif the soun*, preserving the sound, H. F. 847.
Conserved, *pp.* preserved, H. F. 732.
Consistorie, *s.* judgment-seat, C 162.
Conspiracye, *s.* plot, B 3889.
Constable, *s.* governor, B 512.
Constablesse, *s.* constable's wife, B 539.
Constance, *s.* constancy, E 668, 1000, 1008.
Constellacioun, *s.* constellation, cluster of stars, F 129.
Constreyneth, *pt. s. refl.* contracted herself, Bo. I. p. i. 16; *pr. s.* constrain, E 800.
Construeth, *imp. pl.* construe, interpret, L. 152.
Consulers, *s. pl.* consuls, Bo. II. p. vi. 14.
Consumpte, *pp. pl.* consumed, Bo. II. m. vii. 30.
Contagious, *adj.* contiguous, Bo. III. p. xii. 5.
Contek, *s.* strife, A 2003.
Contenance, *s.* pretence, appearance, G 1264; demeanor, E 924; self-possession, E 1110.
Contene, *pt. s.* held together, Bo. III. p. xii. 46.
Contraire, *s.* the contrary, H. F. 1540; adversary, M. P. ii. 64.
Contraire, *adj.* adverse, L. 1360.
Contrarie, *adj.* contrary, B 3964; *in contrarie*, in contradiction, G 1477.
Contrarien, *v.* to go contrary to, oppose, F 705.
Contree, fatherland, home, Bo. II. p. iv. 134; country, L. 5.
Contree-ward, to his, toward his country, L. 2176.
Contre-houses, *pl.* houses of his country, homes, M. P. vii. 25.
Controve, *v.* contrive, R. 7547.
Contubernial, *s.* fellow-soldier, I 760.
Contune, *v.* continue, R. 5205.
Conveyen, *v.* convey, introduce, E 55; Conveyed, *pt. pl.* accompanied, went as convoy, E 391.
Convict, *pp.* convicted (of evil), overcome, M. P. i. 86.
Conyes, *pl.* rabbits, conies, M. P. v. 193.
Cool, *adj.* unimaginative, dull, L. (A) 258.
Coomen, *pt. pl.* came, B 1805. See **Come**.
Cop, *s.* summit, Bo. II. m. iv. 7.
Cope, *s.* vault, L. 1527.
Coper, *s.* copper, H. F. 1487; G 829.
Coppe, *s.* hill-top, H. F. 1166; cup, A 134.
Corage, *s.* mind, M. P. iii. 794; heart, mind, L. 397; courage, B 1970; will, E 907; feeling, disposition, E 220; *of his corage*, in his disposition, F 22.
Corbettes, *pl.* corbels, H. F. 1304.
Cordewane, *s.* Cordovan leather, B 1922.
Corfew-tyme, *s.* curfew-time, about 8 P.M., A 3645.
Corige, *v.* correct; *pr. s.* Bo. IV. p. vii. 42.
Cormeraunt, *s.* cormorant, M. P. v. 362.
Corn, *s.* grain, C 863; Cornes, *pl.* cornfields, pieces of standing corn, B 3225; grains of corn, H. F. 698.
Cornemuse, *s.* bagpipe, H. F. 1218.
Corniculere, *s.* registrar, secretary, G 369.
Corny, *adj.* applied to ale, strong of the corn or malt, C 315, 456.
Corosif, *adj.* corrosive, G 853.

Coroumpinge, *s.* corruption, Bo. III. p. xii. 90.
Coroun, *s.* crown, L. 216; the constellation called 'the Northern Crown,' L. 2224; Coroune, crown, M. P. ii. 58; Corone, crown, garland, E 381.
Corouned, *pp.* crowned, L. 242; B 3555.
Corps, *s.* dead body, M. P. ii. 19; F 519.
Corpus, *s.* body; *Corpus Dominus*, false Latin for *corpus Domini*, the body of the Lord, B 1625; *Corpus Madrian*, the body of St. Mathurin, B 3082; *Corpus bones*, an intentionally nonsensical oath, composed of 'corpus domini,' the Lord's body, and 'bones,' C 314.
Correccioun, *s.* correction, I 60.
Corrumpable, *adj.* corruptible, A 3010.
Corrumpeth, *pr. s.* (everything) becomes corrupt, L. 2237; Corrumped, *pt. s.* corrupted, I 819.
Cors, *s.* body, L. 676; corpse, C 665.
Corseynt, *s.* a saint (lit. holy body); esp. a shrine, H. F. 117.
Corumpe, *v.* become corrupt, Bo. III. p. xi. 65.
Corve, *pp.* cut, L. 2695. See **Kerveth.**
Corven, *pp.* cut, M. P. v. 425; carved, H. F. 1295.
Cos, *s.* kiss, R. 3663.
Cost, *s.* coast, place, R. 3931; choice, condition; *Nedes cost*, of necessity (lit. by condition of necessity), L. 2697; cost, B 3564.
Costage, *s.* cost, expense, outlay, E 1126.
Coste, *s.* the coast, B 1626.
Costeying, *pr. pt.* coasting, skirting, R. 134.
Costrel, *s.* flask, kind of bottle, L. 2666.
Cote, *s.* a cot, E 398.
Cote, *s.* a coat, outer garment, used of a part of a woman's apparel, E 913.
Cote-armour, *s.* coat with armorial bearings, B 2056.
Cote-armure, *s.* surcoat, H. F. 1326.
Couche, *v.* to cower, E 1206.
Couchen, *v.* lay, R. 6903; Couched, *pt. s.* laid down, laid in order, M. P. v. 216.
Coude, *pt. s.* knew, M. P. iii. 667; *coude no good*, knew nothing that was good, was untrained, M. P. iii. 390; Coud, *pp.* known, M. P. iii. 787; Coude, 1 *pt. s.* could, was able, L. 116; *pt. s.* knew; *coude her good*, knew what was for Dido's good, L. 1182. See **Can, Couthe.**
Counsaile, *imp. s.* counsel, M. P. i. 155.
Counseyl, *s.* secret, M. P. v. 348.
Countenaunce, *s.* appearance, show, M. P. x. 34; looks, appearance, M. P. iii. 613; showing favor, M. P. iii. 1022.
Counterfete, *v.* render exactly, repeat, M. P. iii. 1241. See **Countrefete.**
Countour, *s.* arithmetician, M. P. iii. 435; auditor, A 359.
Countour, *s.* abacus, counting-board, M. P. iii. 436.
Countrefete, *v.* counterfeit, copy, H. F. 1212; Countrefeted, *pp.* feigned, M. P. iii. 869. See **Counterfete.**
Countrepeise, *v.* cause to balance each other, render equivalent, H. F. 1750.
Countrepleted, *pp.* made the subject of pleadings and counter-pleadings, argued against, L. 476.
Countre-taille, *s.* counter-tally, E 1190.
Countrewayte, *v.* watch against, B 2509.
Coupe, *s.* cup, L. 1122.
Coured, *pt. s.* cowered, R. 465.
Cours, *s.* course, M. P. iv. 55; L. 1340.
Coursere, *s.* courser, horse, L. 1114.
Courtepy, *s.* cape, A 290.
Couth, *pp.* plain, evident, R. 4213; known, E 942.
Couthe, 1 *pt. s.* knew, M. P. iii. 800; could, M. P. iii. 759. See **Coude.**
Couthe, *adv.* in a known way, manifestly, H. F. 757.
Coveityse, *s.* covetousness, C 424.
Covenable, *adj.* fit, proper, M. P. xviii. 25; agreeable, Bo. IV. p. vi. 245; congruous, Bo. III. p. xii. 198; suitable, I 80.
Covent, *s.* conventual body, the monks composing the conventual body, B 1827; convent, G 1007.
Coverchiefs, *s. pl.* kerchiefs, A 453.
Covercle, *s.* pot-lid, H. F. 792.
Covered, *pp.* recovered from, healed of, L. 762; *pt. s.* covered, E 914.
Covetour, *s.* one who covets, M. P. iv. 262.
Covetyse, *s.* covetousness, M. P. ix. 32; L. 136.
Covyne, *s.* craft, intriguing, R. 3799.
Coward, *adj.* cowardly, B 3100.
Coy, *adj.* shy, L. 1548; *adj.* or *adv.* quiet, E 2.
Coye, *v.* quiet, T. ii. 801.
Coyn, *s.* coin, M. P. ix. 20; E 1168.
Coynes, *s. pl.* quinces, R. 1374.
Crabbed, *adj.* shrewish, cross, bitter, E 1203.
Cracching, *s.* scratching, A 2834.
Cradel, *s.* cradle, G 122.
Craft, *s.* art, M. P. v. 1; skill, way of doing a thing, F 185; secret power, might, B 3258 subtle contrivance, F 249.
Craftily, *adv.* cunningly, skilfully, B 48.
Crafty, *s.* skilful, sensible, M. P. iii. 439.
Crafty, *adj.* skilful, clever, G 1290.
Craketh, *pr. s.* sings hoarsely, E 1850.
Crampissheth, *pr. s.* draws convulsively together, M. P. vii. 171.
Crased, *pp.* cracked, G 934.
Creat, *adj.* created, M. P. xvi. 2.
Creatour, *s.* Creator, C 901.

Creaunce, *s.* belief, credence, M. P. i. 61; creed, B 915; Creance, object of faith, B 340.
Creaunce, *v.* get credit, B 1479; creanced, *pp.* raised on credit, B 1556.
Crece, *s.* increase, R. 4875.
Crede, *s.* creed, belief, G 1047.
Credence, *s.* belief, credence, L. 20.
Crekes, *s. pl.* devices, A 4051.
Crepe, *v.* creep, B 3627; Crepeth, *pr. s.* E 1134.
Crepul, *s.* cripple, T. iv. 1458.
Crevace, *s.* crevice, crack, H. F. 2086.
Crinkled, *pp.* full of turns or cranks, L. 2012.
Crips, *adj.* crisp, curly, H. F. 1386.
Cristal, *adj.* crystal, C 347.
Cristemasse, *s.* Christmas, B 126, 1730.
Cristen, *adj.* Christian, B 222.
Cristendom, *s.* the Christian religion, B 351; Christianity, G 447.
Cristenly, *adv.* in a Christian manner, B 1122.
Cristianitee, *s.* company of Christians, B 544.
Cristned, *pp.* baptized, B 226; G 352.
Cristofre, *s.* image of St. Christopher worn as an amulet, A 115.
Croce, *s.* cross, crozier, R. 6470.
Crois, *s.* cross, M. P. i. 60. See **Cros.**
Crokes, *pl.* crooks, hooks, L. 640.
Crokke, *s.* earthenware pot, M. P. xiii. 12
Crommes, *s. pl.* crumbs, G 60.
Crone, *s.* crone, hag, B 432.
Crop, *s.* top, summit, T. v. 25.
Cropen, *pp.* crept, A 4259.
Croper, *s.* crupper, G 566.
Croppes, *s. pl.* tops, M. P. iii. 424.
Cros, *s.* cross, M. P. i. 82. See **Crois.**
Croslet, *s.* a crucible, G 1147; Crosselet, G 1117.
Crouche, *pr. s.* sign with the cross, A 3479.
Croude, *v.* crowd, push, H. F. 2095; Crowdest, 2 *pr. s.* dost press, dost push, B 296.
Crouke, *s.* crock, A 4158.
Croune, *s.* crown, head, H. F. 1825.
Crouned, *pp.* crowned, M. P. i. 144; crowned, *i.e.* supreme, F 526. See **Corouned.**
Crowding, *s.* pressure, motive power, B 299.
Croweth, *pr. s. refl.*: *him croweth,* crows, C 362.
Crownet, *s.* coronet, R. 3203.
Croys, *s.* cross, B 450; C 532; E 556.
Crul, *adj. pl.* curly, A 81.
Cubyte, *s.* cubit, H. F. 1370.
Cucurbites, *s. pl.* flasks for distilling, G 794.
Cukkow, *s.* cuckoo, M. P. v. 358.
Culpe, *s.* guilt, I 336.
Cunne, *v.* be able, H. F. 2004.
Cunning, *s.* skill, M. P. v. 167, 487.
Cure, *s.* heed, care, M. P. ii. 82; H. F. 1298; *I do no cure,* I care not, L. 152; *lyth in his cure,* depends on whether he cares for me, L. 1176; remedy, cure, M. P. v. 128; *did his besy cure,* was busily employed, M. P. v. 369; *his lyves cure,* the object of his thoughts always, M. P. iv. 131; charge, Bo. II. p. iii. 35; care, endeavor, B 188; honest cure = care for honorable things, C 557; in cure = in her care, in her power, B 230.
Cures, *s. pl.* cares, pursuits, E 82.
Curiositee, *s.* intricacy, M. P. xviii. 81.
Curre, *s.* cur, L. 396.
Currours, *s. pl.* runners, couriers, H. F. 2128.
Cursedly, *adv.* wickedly, abominably, B 3419.
Cursednesse, *s.* malice, B 1821; wickedness, B 3575; shrewishness, E 1239.
Curteisly, *adv.* courteously, B 1636.
Curteisye, *s.* courtesy, refinement, B 3686; E 74; F 95.
Curteyn, *s.* curtain, M. P. v. 240.
Customere, *adj.* accustomed, R. 4936.
Cut, *s.* a lot, C 793.
Cutted, *pp.* cut short, L. 973.

D.

Daf, *s.* fool, A 4208.
Dagginge, *s.* slitting, I 418.
Dagon, *s.* fragment, D 1751.
Dale, *s.* the dale, M. P. v. 327.
Daliance, Daliaunce, *s.* favor, L. 356; playful demeanor; *he doth daliaunce,* he behaves playfully and good-naturedly, B 1894.
Damage, *s.* pity, loss, L. 598.
Dame, *s.* mother, C 684.
Dampnable, *adj.* damnable, C 472.
Dampnacioun, *s.* damnation, C 500.
Dampne, 1 *pr. s.* condemn, M. P. x. 49; Dampned, *pp.* condemned, M. P. iii. 725.
Dan, *s. as epithet of persons,* Sir, H. F. 161. See **Daun.**
Dar, 1 *pr. s.* dare, M. P. i. 53; Darstow, darest thou, L. 1450; Darst, 2 *pr. s.* darest, B 860; Dorste, *pt. s.* durst, B 753. See **Dorste.**
Dare, *v.* daze, D 1294.
Darketh, *pr. s.* lies in the dark, lies hid, L. 816.
Darreyne, *v.* contest, A 1609.
Daswed, *pp.* dazed, confused, H. F. 658; Daswen, *pt. pl.* daze, are dazed, are dazzled, H 31.
Date, *s.* a date, term, period, G 1411.
Daun, *s.* lord, sir, A 1379; Dan, B 3982.
Daunce, *s.* dance, set, H. F. 639.
Daunce, *v.* to dance, B 126; Dauncen, *pr. pl.* F 272; Daunceden, *pt. pl.* danced, M. P. v. 232.
Dauncing-chambres, *pl.* dancing-rooms, L. 1100.
Daungere, *s.* influence, dominion, R. 1470; Danger, Power to Harm (personified), M. P. v. 136.
Daungerous, *adj.* difficult to please, B 2120.
Daunte thyself, *imp. s.* subdue thyself, M. P.

xiii. 13; Dauntest, 2 *pr. s.* tamest, M. P. v. 114.

Dawe, *v.* to dawn, B 3872; Daweth, *pr. s.* dawns, L. 46.

Dawening, *s.* dawning, dawn, L. 1188.

Dawes, *s. pl.* days, R. 2838.

Dawing, *s.* dawn, T. iii. 1466.

Day, *s.* day; also, an appointed day for the payment of a sum of money, G 1040; day, time, B 3374; Dayes, *pl.* days, lifetime, B 118; *now a dayes*, now-a-days, at this time, E 1164.

Dayeseye, *s.* daisy, L. 182; Daysie, L. 224.

Debaat, *s.* strife, G 1389.

Debat, *s.* struggle, mental conflict, M. P. iii. 1192; debate, strife, war, B 130.

Debate, *v.* to fight, war, B 2058.

Debonaire, *adj.* gracious, M. P. i. 6; *as s.* kind person, M. P. iii. 624.

Debonairly, *adv.* graciously, kindly, M. P. iii. 851; courteously, M. P. iii. 518; gently, T. ii. 1259; Debonerly, with kindness, M. P. vii. 127.

Debonairtee, *s.* graciousness, M. P. vi. 108.

Deceivable, *adj.* capable of deceiving, full of deceit, M. P. xv. 3; Deceyvable, M. P. xviii. 43.

Declaring, *s.* declaration, B 3172.

Declyneth, *pr. s.* turns aside, Bo. IV. p. vi. 212.

Declyninge, *adj.* sloping, Bo. V. m. i. 20.

Decoped, *pp.* slit, R. 843.

Dede, *pp.* dead, A 942. See **Deed**.

Dede, *s. dat.* deed, M. P. i. 45; in dede = indeed, in reality, B 3511.

Dede, *ger. s.* to grow dead, become stupefied, H. F. 552.

Deduyt, *s.* delight, A 2177.

Deed, *adj.* dead, M. P. ii. 14; *pp. as adj.* dead, B 209; *pp.* dead, F 287; Dede, *pl.* sluggish, M. P. v. 187; *with woundes dede*, deadly wounds, M. P. iii. 1211.

Deedly, *adj.* deathly, dying, L. 885.

Deedly, *adv.* deadly, mortally, G 476.

Deef, *adj.* deaf, A 446.

Deel, *s.* share, part, bit, H. F. 331; *pl.* times, M. P. vi. 35. See **Del**.

Deer, *s. pl.* animals, B 1926.

Dees, *s.* daïs, H. F. 1360, 1658.

Dees, *s. pl.* dice, T. ii. 1347; F 690.

Deeth, *s.* death, B 3567; E 36, 510.

Deface, *v.* to obliterate, E. 510.

Defame, *s.* dishonor, C 612. See **Diffame**.

Defaute, *s.* lack, want, M. P. iii. 5; defect, M. P. xxii. 56; E 1018; fault (hunting term), *were on a defaute y-falle*, had a check, M. P. iii. 384; default, fault, wickedness, B 3718; fault, sin, C 370.

Defence, *s.* concealment, covering, M. P. v. 273; resistance, L. 1931; prohibition, R. 1142.

Defenden, *v.* to forbid, C 590.

Defet, *pp.* enfeebled, T. v. 618.

Defoulen, *pp.* disgraced, Bo. IV. m. vii. 54.

Degyse, *adj.* fashionable, I 417.

Degree, *s.* footstep, Bo. IV. m. i. 47; horizontal stripes, Bo. I. p. i. 42; rank, A 1168.

Degrees, *s. pl.* degrees of the zodiac, F 386.

Deknes, *s. pl.* deacons, G 547.

Del, *s.* part, bit, whit, M. P. iii. 937; share, M. P. iii. 1001; part; *every del*, every whit, entirely, G 1269; *pl.* times, H. F. 1495; *a gret del*, a great deal, very often, M. P. iii. 1159; *never a del*, not a whit, M. P. iii. 543. See **Deel**.

Deled, *pt. pl.* dealt, had intercourse, L. 1517.

Delicacye, *s.* luxury, wantonness, M. P. ix. 58; Delicasye, M. P. v. 359.

Delices, *s. pl.* tender feelings, Bo. II. p. iv. 87; sinful pleasures, Bo. III. p. vii. 1.

Delitably, *adv.* pleasingly, Bo. IV. p. i. 2.

Deliver, *adj.* active, A 84.

Delivere, *ger.* to let go away, set free (after a legal decision has been passed), M. P. v. 508; Delivered, *pp.; to ben delivered*, to be let go (after the sentence has been passed), M. P. v. 491.

Deliverly, *adv.* adroitly, B 4606.

Delivernesse, *s.* agility, I 452.

Delphyn, *s.* the constellation Delphin, or the Dolphin, H. F. 1006.

Delte, *pt. s.* dealt, G 1074.

Delve, *v.* to dig up, F 638; Dalf, 1 *pt. s.* dug, Bo. V. p. i. 111; Dolve, *pt. s. subj.* had digged, Bo. V. p. i. 97.

Delyces, *s. pl.* favorites, Bo. II. p. iii. 81; delights, pleasures, C 547; G 3.

Delyè, *adj.* delicate, fine, Bo. I. p. i. 25.

Delyt, *s.* delight, M. P. iii. 606; pleasing ornamentation, L. 1199.

Delytable, *adj.* delightful, L. 321.

Delyte, *v.* delight, please, M. P. v. 27; *refl.* take pleasure, M. P. v. 66.

Delyte me, 1 *pr. s. refl.* delight, am delighted, L. 30.

Delyting, *pr. pt.* delighting, E 997.

Demandes, *s. pl.* questions, E 348.

Demaunde, *s.* demand, question, B 472.

Deme, *v.* judge, M. P. xiv. 6; suppose, B 1038; give a verdict, G 595; Demeth, *pr. s.* passes an opinion, M. P. v. 166; fancies, G 689; Demeth, *imp. pl.* judge, L. 453; suppose ye, G 993; Demed, *pt. pl.* (people) thought, L. 1244; Demen, to give judgment, B 1639.

Demeine, *v.* manage, H. F. 959.

Demen, *v.* judge, B 3045.

Demene, *v.* endure, R. 5238.

Demeyne, *s.* dominion, B 3855.

Denye, *v.;* Deneyed, *pp.* denied, Bo. III. p. x. 17.

Depardieux, *interj.* on the part of God, by God's help, B 39.

Departe, *v.* part, separate, M. P vii. 285; part, L. 897; distinguish, T. iii. 404; Departen, *pr. pl.* sever, M. P. iv. 207; Departed, *pt. s.* parted, B 1158; divided, C 812.

Departinge, *s.* parting, separation, departure, M. P. v. 675.

Depe, *adv.* deeply, L. 1234; B 4.

Depe, *adj.* deep, B 3988.

Depe, *s.* the deep, the sea, B 455.

Depeynted, *pp.* covered with paintings, M. P. iii. 322; depicted, painted, L. 1025.

Depper, *adv. comp.* deeper, B 630.

Dere, *adj.* dear, M. P. iv. 147; *pl.* F 272.

Dere, *adv.* dearly, M. P. i. 86; *to dere*, too dearly, C 293.

Dere, *v.* injure, wound, harm, F 240.

Dereling, *s.* darling, A 3793.

Derk, *adj.* dark, M. P. iii. 170; inauspicious, M. P. iv. 120; *as s.*, inauspicious position, M. P. iv. 122.

Derke, *s.* darkness, gloom, M. P. iii. 609.

Derked, *pp.* grown dim, M. P. x. 36.

Derkest, *adj. superl.* darkest, B 304.

Derne, *adj.* secret, A 3200.

Derre, *adv. comp.* more dearly, A 1448.

Desceivaunce, *s.* deception, Bo. III. p. viii. 58.

Descensories, *s. pl.* vessels for extracting oil, G 792.

Desclaundred, *pp.* slandered, B 674.

Descryve, *v.* describe, H. F. 1105.

Desert, *s.* desert, deserving, merit, F 532.

Deserte, *adj.* desert, lonely, H. F. 417.

Desespaired, *pp.* out of hope, in despair, M. P. vi. 7.

Desirous, *adj.* ardent, F 23.

Deslavee, *adj.* unbridled, I 629.

Desolaat, *adj.* deserted, alone; *holden desolaat*, shunned, C 598.

Desolat, *adj.* desolate, M. P. iv. 286; desolate, *i.e.* void of, lacking in, B 131.

Desordeynee, *adj.* inordinate, I 818.

Desordinat, *adj.* disorderly, I 415.

Despeired, *pp.* put in despair, M. P. ii. 91; filled with despair, B 3645.

Despence, *s.* expenses, expenditure, money for expenses, B 105. See **Dispence**.

Despendest, 2 *pr. s.* spendest, wastest, B 2121.

Desperacioun, *s.* despair, M. P. i. 21.

Despit, *s.* spite, B 591; vexation, dishonor, B 699.

Despitous, *adj.* hateful, M. P. xxii. 12. See **Dispitousé**.

Despitously, *adv.* despitefully, maliciously, B 605. See **Dispitously**.

Desport, *s.* amusement, sport, G 592. See **Disport**.

Despyse, *v.* to despise, B 115.

Despyt, *s.* despite, scorn, L. 372; malice, L. 1771; *in his despyt*, in scorn of him, L. 134; despite, a deed expressive of contempt, B 3738; in your despyt = in spite of you, in contempt of you, B 1753.

Despyte, *s.* disdain, M. P. xxiii. 18.

Desray, *s.* disarray, confusion, I 927.

Destemperaunce, *s.* inclemency, Bo. III. p. xi. 148.

Destinal, *adj.* fatal, Bo. IV. p. vi. 187; predestined, Bo. IV. p. vi. 119.

Destourbe, *v.* to disturb; *destourbe of*, to disturb in, C 340.

Destourbing, *s.* disturbance, trouble, M. P. xviii. 44.

Destrat, *pp.* distracted, Bo. III. p. viii. 20.

Destreyne. See **Distreyne**.

Destroubled, *pp.* disturbed, M. P. iii. 524.

Determyne, *v.* come to an end, T. iii. 379; determined, *pp.* settled, Bo. V. p. iv. 10; Determynen, 2 *pr. pl.* end, H. F. 343.

Dette, *s.* debt, L. 541.

Deve, *adj. pl.* deaf, G 286.

Deviaunt, *adj.* divergent, R. 4789.

Devil; *a twenty devil way*, in the way of twenty devils, *i.e.* to utter destruction, L. 2177.

Devoided, *pp.* banished, R. 2929.

Devoir, *s.* duty, B 38; E 966.

Devyne, *ger.* to divine, to prophesy (by), M. P. v. 182; *pr. s. subj.* let (him) guess, H. F. 14.

Devys, *adj.* exact; *at point devys*, with great exactitude, H. F. 917.

Devys, *s.* device, L. 1102; Devyses, *pl.* heraldic devices, badges, L. 1272.

Devyse, *v.* devise, suggest, ordain, L. 437; plan, L. 1453; *ger.* to relate, tell, B 154; to describe, F 65; to plan, E 698; to frame, E 739; Devysen, *v.* tell, M. P. v. 333; imagine, E 108; Devyse, 1 *pr. s.* say, M. P. iv. 18; relate, L. 202; I tell, B 3693; Devyse, *pr. pl.* imagine, discourse, F 261; Devyseth, *pr. s.* tells, describes, M. P. v. 317.

Dextrer, *s.* a courser, war-horse, B 2103.

Deye, *v.* die, M. P. v. 469; Deyen, *v.* die, E 665; Deyde, *pt. s.* died, C 580; Deyeth, *pr. s.* dies, G 1436; Deyed, *pp.* B 1841; Deydest, *pt. s.* didst die, T. iii. 263.

Deyen, *ger.* to dye, to dip, Bo. IV. m. vi. 16.

Deyinge, *s.* dying, death, B 1850.

Deyneth, *impers. pr. s.*; *ne deyneth him*, he deigns not, troubles not, M. P. vii. 181; *her deyned*, *pt. s.* she deigned, M. P. iv. 30; *deyned him*, *pt. s.* it deigned him, *i.e.* he deigned, B 3324.

Deynte, *s.* value; *took lesse deynte for*, set less value on, M. P. vii. 143.

Deyntee, *s.* delight, pleasure, L. 206; a pleasant

thing, L. 290; pleasure, B 139; F 681; Deyntees, *pl.* dainties, F 301.
Deyntee, *adj.* dainty, pleasant, rare, B 1901; C 520; E 1112; F 70.
Deynteuous, *adj.* dainty, E 265.
Deys, *s.* daïs, F 59.
Diademe, *s.* diadem, crown of an emperor, M. P. xiv. 7.
Dichen, *v.* make a dyke round, L. 708.
Did, *pt. s.* made, caused, M. P. v. 145; Dide, did, M. P. iii. 373; *dide of*, took off, M. P. iii. 516; Dide, *pt. s.* put on, B 2047; dide hem drawe = caused to be drawn, B 1823. See **Doon**.
Dide. See **Did**.
Diffame, *s.* evil name, ill report, E 540, 730. See **Defame**.
Diffame, *ger.* to defame, rob of fame, H. F. 1581.
Diffinisshe, *pr. s. subj.* define, Bo. V. p. i. 40.
Diffusioun, *s.* diffuseness, T. iii. 296.
Diffyne, *ger.* define, state clearly, M. P. v. 529; Diffynen, 2 *pr. pl.* conclude, H. F. 344.
Dighte, *v.* dight, prepare, L. 1288; prepare (himself), L. 1000; *dighte me*, prepare myself to go, B 3104; Dighte him, *pt. s.* betook himself, L. 2155; *pt. pl.* betook themselves, L. 1712; Dighte, *pp. pl.* prepared, L. 2611.
Digne, *adj.* worthy, honorable, L. 321; worthy, noble, B 1175; worthy, honored, C 695; suitable, B 778.
Digneliche, *adv.* haughtily, T. ii. 1024.
Dignitee, *s.* dignity, rank, E 470.
Dilatacioun, *s.* diffuseness, B 232.
Direct, *adj.* directed, addressed, M. P. xviii. 75.
Disavaunce, *v.* hinder, T. ii. 511.
Dischevele, *adj.* with dishevelled hair, with hair in disorder, L. 1315.
Discomfiture, *s.* discomfort, grief, M. P. vii. 326.
Discorden, *pr. pl.* disagree, Bo. IV. p. vi. 226.
Discordinge, *adj.* different, Bo. III. p. ii. 156.
Discovere, *v.* to reveal, G 1465.
Discreven, *v.* describe, R. 4803.
Discripcioun, *s.* description, F 580.
Discryve, *ger.* to describe, M. P. iii. 916; Discryveth, *pt. s.* describes, E 43.
Discure, *v.* reveal, discover, M. P. iii. 549.
Discussed, driven away, Bo. I. m. iii. 1.
Disdeyn, *s.* disdain, contempt, F 700.
Disdeyne, *v.* to disdain, E 98.
Disencreseth, *pr. s.* decreases, Bo. V. p. vi. 95.
Disese, *s.* discomfort, misery, M. P. iv. 216; discomfort, source of pain, distress, B 3961; misery, F 467; lack of ease, trouble, distress, misery, B 616; G 747; H 97.
Disesperat, *adj.* hopeless, without hope, H. F. 2015.
Disfigurat, *adj.* disguised, M. P. v. 222.
Disherited. *pp.* disinherited, L. 1065.
Disjoint, *s.* perilous situation, peril, L. 1631.
Dismalle, *s.* unlucky day, M. P. iii. 1206.
Disobeysaunt, *adj.* disobedient, M. P. v. 429.
Disordinaunce, *s.* irregularity, violation of rules, H. F. 27.
Disparage, *s.* disparagement, disgrace, E 908.
Dispence, *s.* favor, H. F. 260; expense, expenditure, E 1209. See **Despence**.
Dispende, *v.* to spend, B 3500.
Dispitousë, *adj. fem.* despiteful, cruel, M. P. iii. 624. See **Despitous**.
Dispitously, *adv.* despitefully, cruelly, H. F. 161. See **Despitously**.
Displesances, *s. pl.* displeasures, annoyances, C 420.
Dispoilen, *v.* to despoil, *i.e.* strip, E 374.
Dispone, *pr. s.* disposes, orders, regulates, Bo. IV. p. vi. 66; *imp.* dispose, T. v. 300.
Disport, *s.* amusement, pastime, sport, M. P. iv. 177; pleasure, B 143. See **Desport**.
Disporte, *ger.* to cheer, amuse, H. F. 571.
Disposed, *pp.* inclined; *wel disposed*, in good health (the converse of *indisposed*), H 33.
Dispoylinge, *s.* spoil, Bo. IV. m. vii. 38.
Disrewlily, *adv.* irregularly, R. 4900.
Disseise, *v.* dispossess, R. 2076.
Dissever, *pr. s. subj.* sever, M. P. iv. 49; *pp.* separated, Bo. IV. p. iii. 21; *ger.* to part, G 875.
Disseveraunce, *s.* severing, Bo. III. p. xi. 72.
Disshevele, *adj. pl.* with hair flowing down, M. P. v. 235.
Dissimulacions, *pl.* dissimulations, H. F. 687.
Dissimuleth, *pr. s.* dissimulates, acts foolishly, G 466.
Dissimulinge, *s.* dissembling, G 1073.
Dissimulour, *s.* dissembler, M. P. x. 23.
Disslaundred, *pp.* defamed, L. 1031.
Dissolveth, *pr. s.* puts an end to, Bo. II. p. iii. 101.
Distempre, *adj.* distempered, furious, Bo. IV. p. iii. 140.
Disteyne, *v.* stain, bedim, dull, L. 255.
Distincte, *v.* distinguish, R. 6199.
Distingwed, *pp.* distinguished, Bo. II. p. v. 83.
Distoned, *pp.* put out of tune, R. 4248.
Distreyne, *v.* get into his grasp, clutch, M. P. xx. 8; Distreyneth, *pr. s.* grasps, clutches, M. P. v. 337; Destreyneth, vexes, constrains, A 1455.
Disturbaunce, *s.* disturbance; *thy disturbaunce*, the disturbance thou hadst to endure, M. P. iv. 107.
Disturne, *v.* turn aside, T. iii. 718.
Ditee, *s.* ditty, song, Bo. III. p. i. 2.
Divers, *adj.* diverse, various, M. P. iii. 653.
Diversely, *adv.* in different ways, F 202.
Divisioun, *s.*; *of my divisioun*, under my influence, M. P. iv. 273.

Divyn, *adj.* divine, B 3247.
Divynour, *s.* seer, soothsayer, Bo. V. p. iii. 164.
Do. See **Doon.**
Doand, *pr. pt.* doing, R. 2708.
Doës, *s. pl.* does, M. P. iii. 429.
Dogerel, *adj.* doggerel, B 2115.
Dogges, *s. pl.* dogs, B 3089.
Doghtren, *pl.* daughters, L. 1963.
Doke, *s.* duck, M. P. v. 498, 589.
Dokked, *pp.* cropped, A 590.
Dole, *s.* dolefulness, R. 2956.
Dolve. See **Delve.**
Dolven, *pp.* buried, M. P. iii. 222.
Domb, Dombe, *adj.* dumb, H. F. 656; L. 2377; Dom., R. 2220.
Dome, *s.* sentence, decision; *her dome*, the decision passed on them, M. P. v. 308; *stonde to the dome*, abide by the decision, M. P. v. 546; opinion, M. P. v. 480; judgment, C 637.
Dominacioun, *s.* domination, supremacy, chiefest influence, F 352; dominion, C 560; power, H 57.
Dominus. See **Corpus.**
Domus Dedali, the labyrinth of Dædalus, H. F. 1920.
Don, Done. See **Doon.**
Donne, *adj.* dun-colored, M. P. v. 334; dun, T. ii. 908.
Dool, *s.* portion, R. 2364.
Doom, *s.* judgment, opinion, B 3127; F 677.
Doon, *v.* do, M. P. iii. 194; G 166; act, B 90; make, B 3507; cause, B 3618; *doon us honge*, cause us to be hung, C 790; *doon her companye*, accompany her, M. P. iv. 125; *leet don cryen*, caused to be cried, F 46; Doon, *pp.* done, M. P. i. 54; past, ended, M. P. iii. 40; completed, G 387; *doon make*, caused to be made, E 253; *hath doon yow kept*, hath caused you to be kept, E 1098; Doon, *ger.* to make, cause, M. P. vii. 283; to do, M. P. iii. 374; to force, M. P. v. 221; Do, *v.* make, M. P. iii. 145; cause, B 3107; Do, *pp.* done, M. P. iii. 528; ended, M. P. v. 693; L. 957; Do, *imp. s.* make, H 12; cause, G 32; *do hange*, cause me to be hung, G 1029; *do fecche*, cause to be fetched, B 662; *do wey*, put away, lay aside, G 487; Do, *ger.* to make, M. P. iii. 1260; Do, 2 *pr. pl.* cause, M. P. v. 651; Do come, *imp. s.* cause to come, B 2035; Do kepe, 2 *pr. pl.* cause to be kept, B 3624; Don, *pp.* done, M. P. v. 70; *to don*, from doing, Bo. IV. p. vi. 354; Done, *ger.* to be done, L. 1597; *for to done*, a fit thing to do, I 62; to do, to have business with, M. P. iv. 234; *what to done*, what is to be done, M. P. iii. 689; Doost, 2 *pr. s.* makest, C 322; Dostow, *for* Dost thou, doest thou, L. 315; Dooth, *imp. pl.* do ye, C 745; do, E 568; *as dooth*, pray do, F 458; Dooth, doth, B 23; Doth, *pr. s.* causes, M. P. vi. 21; makes, M. P. ii. 71; Doth forth, *pr. s.* continues, E 1015.
Dore, *s.* a door, E 282; F 615.
Dorste, 1 *pt. s.* durst, might venture to, M. P. v. 541; *pt. pl.* dared to do, L. 749. See **Dar.**
Dossers, *pl.* baskets to carry on the back, H. F. 1940.
Dotage, *s.* folly, M. P. xvii. 8.
Dote, *v.* dote, grow foolish, L. (A) 261; Doten, grow foolish, act foolishly, G 983.
Doted, *pp. as adj.* doting, stupid, M. P. xvii. 13.
Double, *adj.* two-faced, deceitful, M. P. vii. 87; H. F. 285.
Doublenesse, *s.* duplicity, G 1300.
Doucet, *adj.* dulcet, *i.e.* dulcet (pipe), sweet-sounding (pipe), H. F. 1221.
Doughter, *s.* daughter, B 151; E 608.
Doughty, *adj.* doughty, strong, F 338; warlike, F 11.
Doun, *s.* down, soft feathers, M. P. ix. 45.
Doun, *adv.* down, F 323; up and down = in all directions, in all ways, B 53. See **Adoun.**
Doune, *s.* down, hill (*dat.*), B 1986.
Doute, *s.* doubt, M. P. i. 25; *with-outen doute*, certainly, L. 1932; peril, L. 1613; *out of doute*, doubtless, B 390.
Doutelees, *adv.* doubtless, without doubt, certainly, C 492; without hesitation, B 226.
Doutes, *s. pl.* fears, F 220.
Doutremere, *adj.* from beyond the seas, foreign, imported, M. P. iii. 253.
Douve, Dowve, *s.* dove, pigeon, M. P. v. 341; L. 937.
Dowaire, *s.* dower, E 848.
Dowe, *pr. s.* bestow, T. v. 230.
Dradde, *pt. s.* dreaded, feared, B 3402; *pr. s.* fears, M. P. vii. 185; Dradde him = was afraid, B 3918; Drad, *pp.* dreaded, E 69; Dradden, *pt. pl. subj.* should dread, should fear, G 15. See **Drede.**
Draf, *s.* draff, refuse (of corn), L. (A) 312; draff, refuse, chaff, I 35.
Dragoun, *s.* dragon, L. 1430, 1581.
Drasty, *adj.* filthy, worthless, trashy, B 2113.
Drat, dreadeth, T. iii. 328.
Draughte, *s.* move at chess, M. P. iii. 682.
Drawe, *pp.* drawn, moved, M. P. iii. 682; *drawe him*, withdraw himself, F 355; Draweth a-long, *pr. s.* prolongs, Bo. I. m. i. 36; Drawen hem, *pr. pl.* withdraw themselves, F 852; Draweth, *imp. pl.* invite, B 1632.
Drecched, *pp.* harassed, B 4077.
Drecching, *s.* delaying, T. iii. 859.
Dredde. See **Drede.**
Drede, *s.* dread, terror, fear, M. P. i. 42; fear of wrong-doing, M. P. vi. 30; uncertainty, M. P. xvii. 28; doubt, M. P. v. 32; *withouta*

drede, without doubt, M. P. iii. 1073; fear, G 204; doubt, C 507; *it is no drede*, there is no doubt, B 869; *out of drede*, out of doubt, certainly, E 634. See **Dreed**.

Drede, *v.* dread, fear, M. P. i. 76; Dred thee, *imp. s.* fear, M. P. v. 159; Drede, 1 *pr. s.* I dread, fear, E 636; **Dreed**, *imp. s.* dread, fear, E 1201; **Dredde**, *pt. s.* dreaded, feared, L. 199; Dredden, *pt. pl.* dreaded, L. 1813; Dreden, *v.* to fear, G 320; To drede, *ger.* to be feared, G 437.

Dredeles, *adj.* fearless, Bo. III. m. xii. 32.

Dredful, *adj.* full of dread, timid, M. P. v. 195; fearful, timid, L. 199; terrible, B 3558.

Dredles, *adv.* of course, without doubt, M. P. iii. 1272; Dredeles, M. P. iii. 764.

Dreed, *s.* doubt, H. F. 292; dread, fear, L. 1728. See **Drede**.

Drenche, *v.* drown, M. P. xvi. 12; H. F. 295; drown, be overwhelmed, L. 1919; Drenchen, to be drowned, B 455; Dreinte, *pt. s.* drowned, M. P. iii. 73; Dreynte, was drowned, H. F. 923; Dreynt, *pp.* drowned, M. P. iii. 148; iv. 89 (pronounced *drë-ynt*, in two syllables).

Drenching, *s.* drowning, B 485.

Drerihed, *s.* dreariness, R. 4728.

Drery, *adj.* terrified, L. 810; sad, E 514.

Dresse, *v.* prepare, L. 1190; address, prepare, E 1049; *dresse her*, settle herself, L. 804; *v. refl.* address himself, G 1271; Dress me, *ger.* address myself, prepare, M. P. v. 88; Dressed, *pp.* prepared, M. P. v. 665; Dresseth hir, *pt. s. refl.* prepares herself, B 265; Dressen, *pr. pl.* prepare themselves, set forward, B 263; Dresse, *pr. pl. refl.* direct themselves, *i.e.* take their places in order, B 416.

Dreye, *adj. as s.* dry, M. P. v. 380.

Dreye, *adj.* dry, B 3233.

Dreynt. See **Drenche**.

Drive, *pp.* driven, B 3203.

Drof, *pt. s.* drove, M. P. vii. 190.

Drogges, *s. pl.* drugs, A 426.

Dronke, *pt. pl.* drank, B 3418; Dronken, B 3390.

Dronkelewe, *adj.* drunken, overcome with drink, C 495.

Dronkenesse, *s.* drunkenness, B 771; C 484.

Drope, *s.* drop, G 522.

Drough, *pt. s. refl.* drew himself, approached, B 1710.

Droughte, *s.* thirst, Bo. II. p. vii. 48; drought, F 118.

Drovy, *adj.* turbid, I 816.

Drow, *pt. s.* drew, moved (of the sun), M. P. v. 490: drew, hoisted, L. 1563; drew, T. iii. 978; Drowe, 2 *pt. s.* drewest; *drowe to record*, didst bring to witness, M. P. xvi. 22, *Pt. t.* of *drawen*.

Druerye, *s.* love, affection, R. 844; Druery, R. 5063.

Drugge, *v.* drudge, A 1416.

Drunken, *adj.* causing drunkenness, M. P. v. 181.

Drye, *v.* endure, suffer, R. 3105.

Drye, *adj.* dry, M. P. iii. 1028; *pl.* dry, without water (of the fish caught at the mouths of rivers in weirs which are covered with water from half-flood to half-ebb, and are left dry as the tide ebbs further), M. P. v. 139.

Dryve, *v.* drive; *dryve away*, pass away, M. P. iii. 49; *dryve the day awey*, pass the time, C 628. See **Drof**.

Duewe, *adj.* due, L. (A) 364.

Duk, *s.* duke, A 860.

Dul, *adj.* dull, F 279.

Dulcarnon, *s.* perplexity, T. iii. 931.

Dulle, *adj.* dull, without emotion, M. P. v. 162.

Dulle, *pr. s.* grow dull, R. 4792; Dulleth, *pr. s.* makes dull, stupefies, G 1172.

Dun, *s.* the dun horse, H 5.

Dungeoun, *s.* donjon-tower, keep-tower, chief castle, L. 937.

Dure, *v.* last, M. P. i. 96.

During, *adj.* enduring, lasting, M. P. iv. 228.

Durre don, dare do, T. v. 840.

Durring don, *s.* daring, T. v. 837.

Durste, 1 *pt. s.* durst, M. P. iii. 929.

Dwale, *s.* sleeping-draught, A 426, 1.

Dwelle, *v.* remain, M. P. iv. 74; *ger.* to tarry, delay, H. F. 252.

Dwellinges, *s. pl.* delays, Bo. I. m. i. 37.

Dwyned, *pp.* dwindled, R. 360.

Dye, *v.* die, M. P. ii. 7; Dyen, *v.* die, B 1144; Dyde, *pt. s.* died, H. F. 196. See **Deye**.

Dyed, *pt. s.* dyed, steeped, F 511.

Dyte, *s.* ditty, M. P. xxiii. 16; Dytees, *pl.* H. F. 622.

E.

Ebbe, *s.* ebb, low water, F 259.

Ech, *adj.* each, M. P. i. 136.

Eche, *v.* eke, increase, T. i. 795; *ger.* to eke out, enlarge, add to, H. F. 2065; Eched, *pp.* increased, T. iii. 1329.

Echines, *s. pl.* sea-urchins, Bo. III. m. viii. 24.

Echoon, each one, L. 290: Echon, M. P. iii. 335.

Edified, *pp.* built up, Bo. IV. p. vi. 311.

Eek, *adv.* eke, also, B 59, 70; moreover, also B 140; also, T. v. 1510.

Eem, *s.* uncle, T. i. 1022.

Eest, *adv.* east, eastward, M. P. iii. 88.

Eet, *pt. s.* ate, C 510; *imp. s.* eat, B 3640; Eete, 3 *pl. pt.* eat, M. P. ix. 11. See **Ete**.

Effect, *s.* deed, reality, M. P. x. 34; *in effect*, in fact, in reality, G 511; Theffect (*for* the effect), the result, the sequel, L. 692; Effectes,

results to be brought about, M. P. iv. 165; chief points of a story, events, results, L. 929.
Eft, *adv.* again, M. P. iv. 11; G 1263; another time, M. P. iii. 41.
Eftsones, *adv.* soon again, T. ii. 1468; soon afterwards, very soon, L. 2322; Eftsone, soon after, G 1288; soon after this, H 65; hereafter, G 933; again, B 909.
Egal, *adj.* equal, T. iii. 137.
Egaly, *adv.* equably, Bo. II. p. iv. 156; impartially, Bo. V. p. iii. 156.
Egge, *s.* edge, sword, M. P. ix. 19; edge, T. iv. 927.
Eggement, *s.* instigation, incitement, B 842.
Egle, *s.* eagle, M. P. v. 330; H. F. 499.
Egre, *adj.* sharp, bitter, R. 5475; eager, sharp, fierce, E 1199.
Egremoine, *s.* agrimony, G 800.
Egren, *v.* incite (lit. make eager), Bo. IV. p. vi. 368.
Eighte, *num.* eight, C 771.
Eightetethe, *ord. adj.* eighteenth, B 5.
Eir, *s.* air, A 1246.
Eisel, *s.* vinegar, R. 217.
Ekko, *s.* echo, E 1189.
Elaat, *adj.* elate, B 3357.
Elde, *s.* old age, long lapse of time, M. P. vii. 12; Eld, old age, M. P. xviii. 76.
Elder, *adj. comp.* older, B 1720, 3450.
Elder fader, *s.* grandfather, Bo. II. p. iv. 56.
Eldres, *s. pl.* elders, forefathers, B 3388.
Elecciouη, *s.* choice, M. P. v. 409, 621.
Elenge, *adj.* wretched, B 1412.
Elengenesse, *s.* wretchedness, R. 7406.
Eles, *pl.* eels, H. F. 2154.
Elf-queen, *s.* fairy queen, B 1978.
Ellebor, *s.* hellebore, B 4154.
Elles, *adv.* else, otherwise, M. P. iii. 997; *elles god forbede*, God forbid it should be otherwise, G 1046.
Elleswher, *adv.* elsewhere, G 1130.
Elvish, *adj.* lit. elvish, imp-like, mysterious; but used in the sense of foolish, G 751; elf-like, abstracted, G 842.
Embassadrye, *s.* embassy, negotiation, B 233.
Embaume, *v.* embalm, L. 676.
Embelif, *adj.* oblique, As. i. 20, 3.
Embelised, *pp.* beautified, Bo. II. p. v. 83.
Embosed, *pp.* sheltered in the woods, M. P. iii. 353.
Emeraude, *s.* emerald, M. P. v. 175; B 1799.
Emforth, *prep.* to the extent of, according to, T. ii. 243.
Emisperies, *s. pl.* hemispheres, As. i. 18, 9.
Empeireden, *pt. pl.* made worse, B 2205.
Emperesse, *s.* empress, M. P. v. 319; Emperice, M. P. iv. 285.
Empeyre, *pr. s.* impair, E 2198.
Emplastre, *pr. pl.* plaster over, 'whitewash,' E 2297.
Empoisoned, *pp.* poisoned, B 3850.
Empoisoning, *s.* poisoning, C 891.
Empoysoner, *s.* poisoner, C 894.
Emprinteth, *imp. pl.* imprint, impress, E 1193.
Empryse, *s.* enterprise, undertaking, G 605.
Empte, *v.* empty, make empty, G 741; *pp. as adj.* exhausted, Bo. I. p. i. 11; worn out, shrunken, Bo. I. m. i. 22; Empten, G 1404.
Enbasshinge, *s.* bewilderment, amazement, Bo. IV. p. i. 48.
Enbibing, *s.* imbibition, absorption, G 814.
Enbrace, *v.* embrace, hold firmly, M. P. xxi. 11.
Enbrouden, *v.* embroider, L. 2351; Enbrouded, *pp.* L. 119.
Encens, *s.* incense, A 2938.
Encense, *v.* to offer incense, G 395, 413.
Enchaufeth, *pr. s.* burns, Bo. V. m. iii. 21.
Encheson, *s.* occasion, cause, F 456; Encheson, B 2783.
Enclyne, *v.* induce to do, M. P. v. 325.
Encomberous, *adj.* cumbersome, oppressive, burdensome, M. P. xviii. 42.
Encombre, *v.* encumber, L. 2006.
Encorporing, *s.* incorporation, G 815.
Encrees, *s.* increase, B 237; G 18.
Encrese, *v.* increase, M. P. ii. 103; Encresse, B 1068; Encresen, B 1654; Encresed, *pt. s.* M. P. v. 143; Encresseth, *pr. s.* E 50; Encressed, *pp.* E 408.
Endamagen, *v.* harm, Bo. I. p. iv. 103; *pp.* compromised, Bo. I. p. i. 81.
Ende, *s.* end, result, B 481.
Ended, *pp.* finite, Bo. II. p. vii. 124.
Endelees, *adj.* endless, B 951.
Endelong, *adv.* along, H. F. 1458.
Endelong, *prep.* all along, L. (A) 144; along, L. 1498; down along, F 416.
Endentinge, *s.* scalloping, I 417.
Endetted, *pp.* indebted, G 734.
Ending-day, *s.* death-day, M. P. xviii. 55.
Endure, *v.* last, B 3538.
Endyte, *ger.* to compose, relate, M. P. v. 119; *v.* tell, L. 1678; indict, B 3858; Endyted, *pp.* composed, B 3170; Endyten, *v.* compose, write, L. 371; indite, write, B 781.
Endyting, *s.* composing, M. P. xviii. 77.
Enfamyned, *pp.* starved, L. 2429.
Enfecteth, *pr. s.* infects, L. 2242.
Enformed, *pp.* informed, E 738; F 335.
Enfortuned, *pt. s.* endowed with powers, M. P. iv. 259.
Engendred, *pp.* engendered, begotten, E 158.
Engendring, *s.* generation, L. (A) 414.
Engendrure, *s.* engendering, begetting, M. P. v. 306.

English, *s.* power of eloquent expression in English, L. 66.
Engreggen, *pr. pl.* weigh upon, I 979.
Engreveth, *pr. s.* grieves, R. 3444.
Engyn, *s.* wit, contrivance, T. iii. 274; skill, craft, H. F. 528; gin, machine, F 184; genius, skill, G 339; Engynes, military machines, R. 4194.
Enhabite, *pr. s.* dwell, R. 6355.
Enhaunced, *pp.* advanced, L. 386; Enhaunsed, promoted, L. 1411.
Enhaused, *pp.* elevated, As. ii. 26, 40.
Enhorte, *v.* exhort, L. 1440.
Enlaceth, *pr. s.* entangles, Bo. I. m. iv. 26; *pp.* involved, made intricate, Bo. III. p. viii. 7.
Enlumined, *pp.* illuminated, M. P. i. 73; *pt. s.* illumined, E 33.
Enluting, *s.* securing with 'lute,' daubing with clay, etc., to exclude air, G 766.
Enmite, *s.* enmity, M. P. iv. 236.
Enpeiren, *v.* injure, Bo. IV. p. iii. 63.
Enpoysoninge, *s.* poisoning, Bo. I. p. iii. 67.
Enpresse, *v.* make an impression on, M. P. xxi. 8.
Enquere, *v.* inquire, search into, B 629.
Enqueringe, *s.* inquiry, B 888.
Ensample, *s.* example, pattern, M. P. iii. 911.
Ensaumpler, *s.* prototype, Bo. III. m. ix. 18.
Enseled, *pp.* sealed up, confirmed, T. v. 151; iv. 559.
Entalenten, *pr. pl.* stimulate, Bo. V. p. v. 6.
Entame, *v.* re-open (lit. cut into), M. P. i. 79.
Entayle, *s.* shape, R. 162; Entaile, cutting, jagging, R. 1081.
Entayle, *v.* carve, R. 3711; Entailed, *pp.* R. 140.
Entecccheth, *pr. s.* infects, Bo. IV. p. iii. 93.
Enteched, *pp.* endued with (good) qualities, T. v. 832.
Entencioun, *s.* intention, intent, C 408.
Entende, *ger.* to direct one's attention, apply one's self, B 3498; to attend, dispose one's self, F 689; *pr. pt.* looking intently, Bo. I. p. ii. 3; *pr. s.* perceive, T. iv. 1649.
Entendement, *s.* perception, H. F. 983.
Entente, *s.* intent, intention, M. P. i. 11; feeling, M. P. v. 532; *do thyn intent*, give heed, M. P. iii. 752; meaning, L. 1149; will, B 824; design, B 3835; plan, B 147, 206; endeavor, G 6; wish, E 189; mind, B 1740; *in good entent*, with good will, B 1902; *as to commune entente*, with reference to its common (*i.e.* plain) meaning, *i.e.* in plain intelligible language, F 107.
Ententeden, *pl. pt.* gave their attention, L. 1155.
Ententif, *adj.* intent upon, eager to, H. F. 1120.
Ententifly, *adv.* attentively, zealously, H. F. 616.
Entermete, *v.* interpose, R. 2966.
Entraille, *s.* entrails, inside, E 1188.
Entre, *v.* enter, M. P. iv. 53; *ger.* M. P. v. 147; Entreth, *imp. pl.* H. F. 1109.
Entrechaunginges, *s. pl.* mutations, Bo. I. m. v. 43; vicissitudes, Bo. II. m. iii. 25.
Entrecomunen, *v.* communicate, T. iv. 1354.
Entrecomuninge, *s.* interchange, Bo. II. p. vii. 68.
Entredited, *pp.* under an interdict, I 905.
Entrees, *pl.* entrances, H. F. 1945.
Entrelaced, *pp.* intricate, Bo. III. p. xii. 183.
Entremedled, *pp.* intermingled, H. F. 2124.
Entremes, *s.* intervening course, M. P. v. 665.
Entremeten him, *v. refl.* interfere in, meddle with, M. P. v. 515.
Entringe, *pr. pt.* entering, I 12.
Entryketh, *pr. s.* holds fast in its subtle grasp, ensnares, M. P. v. 403.
Entunes, *s. pl.* tunes, M. P. iii. 309.
Envenimed, *pp.* envenomed, poisoned, B 3314.
Envenyme, *v.* poison, M. P. iii. 641.
Enviroun, *adv.* round about, L. 300.
Enviroune, *v.* encompass, Bo. III. m. ix. 50.
Envoluped, *pp.* wrapped up, enveloped, involved, C 942.
Envye, *v.* vie, strive, M. P. iii. 406; Envyen, vie (with), H. F. 1231.
Envye, *s.*; *to envye*, in rivalry, M. P. iii. 173; envy, jealousy, B 3584.
Envyned, *pp.* supplied with wine, A 342.
Equipolences, *s. pl.* equivalents, R. 7076.
Equitee, *s.* equity, justice, E 439.
Er, *adv.* before, B 420; G 1273.
Er, *conj.* ere, before, M. P. i. 16; iv. 14; *er that*, before, M. P. ii. 35; **ere**, B 119; F 130; *er now*, ere now, F 460; *er that*, before, E 178.
Er, *prep.* before, M. P. i. 39; *er tho*, before then, L. 1062; before, C 892; *er that*, before that, G 375.
Erbe, *s.* herb, L. (A) 109.
Erber, *s.* arbor, L. (A) 97. See **Herber**.
Erchedeken, *s.* archdeacon, D 1300.
Ere, *s.* ear, M. P. i. 115; F 196, 316.
Ered, *pp.* ploughed, H. F. 485.
Erke, *adj.* irked, weary, R. 4867.
Erl, *s.* earl, B 3597, 3646.
Erme, *v.* feel sad, grieve, M. P. iii. 80; C 312.
Ernes, *s.* earnestness, R. 4838.
Ernestful, *adj.* serious, E 1175.
Erraunt, *adj.* errant, stray (because near the middle of the chess-board), M. P. iii. 661.
Errour, *s.* doubt, uncertainty, M. P. v. 146; perplexity, M. P. xvi. 7.
Ers, *s.* buttocks, A 3734.
Erst, *adv.* first, at first, M. P. i. 87; formerly, before, L. 271; *at erst*, for the first time, B

1884; G 151; *long erst er*, long first before, C 662. See Er.
Erthe, *s.* earth, M. P. i. 50; v. 57.
Eschaufede, *pt. s.* chafed, Bo. I. p. v. 74.
Eschaufeth, *pr. s.* grows warm, Bo. I. m. vi. 2.
Eschaunges, *pl.* exchanges, interchangings, H. F. 697.
Eschue, *v.* to eschew, avoid, shun, G 4.
Ese, *s.* ease, solace, delight, M. P. iv. 63; ease, E 217; pleasure, G 746; ease, relief, H 25; *do you ese*, give you pleasure, M. P. vi. 78.
Ese, *v.* ease, relieve, L. 1704.
Espleyten, *v.* perform, R. 6174.
Espye, *v.* espy, note, M. P. vii. 64; inquire about, B 180; Espyen, *v.* spy, look about, L. 858.
Essoyne, *s.* excuse for absence, I 164.
Est, *s.* east, B 297, 493, 3657.
Estaat, *s.* stateliness, state, M. P. ii. 41; rank, B 973; estate, condition, rank, B 3992; way, E 610.
Estableth, *pr. s.* settles, causes, Bo. IV. p. iv. 56.
Estat, *s.* estate, state, condition, L. 125.
Estatlich, *adj.* stately, A 140.
Estatuts, *s.* ordinances, Bo. II. p. i. 51.
Estres, *pl.* inner premises of a house, L. 1715.
Esy, *adj.* easy, M. P. iii. 1008; pleasant, gentle, M. P. v. 382.
Ete, *v.* eat, F 617; Et, *pr. s.* eats, L. 1389; Eten, *pr. pl.* eat, M. P. v. 325; Eete, M. P. ix. 11.
Eterne, *adj.* eternal, M. P. i. 56; xvi. 8.
Ethe, *adj.* easy, T. v. 850.
Etik, the Ethics of Aristotle, L. 166.
Evangyles, *s. pl.* gospels, B 666.
Eve, *s.* eve, evening, F 364; G 375.
Evel, *adv.* ill, M. P. iii. 501; B 1897.
Even, *adv.* evenly, aright, exactly, M. P. iii. 441; *ful even*, actually, M. P. iii. 1329.
Evene, *adj.* even, E 811.
Evene-lyk, *adj.* similar, Bo. V. p. ii. 28.
Everich, each one, M. P. v. 401; every one, E 1017; either of the two, B 1004.
Everichon, every one, B 330; Everichoon, each one, L. 2567; Everichone, each one, H. F. 337. *Ever in oon*, constantly, continually, M. P. ii. 9.
Evermo, *adv.* evermore, always, continually, M. P. iii. 81; L. 1239.
Everydel, *adv.* entirely, wholly, every bit, M. P. iii. 222; exactly, M. P. iii. 1014.
Ew, *s.* yew, M. P. v. 180.
Exaltacioun, *s.* exaltation (a term in astrology), I 10.
Exametron, *s.* a hexameter, B 3169.
Exces, *s.* excess, extravagance, T. i. 626.
Excusaciouns, *pl.* excuses, L. (A) 362.
Exercitacioun, *s.* exercise, Bo. IV. p. vi. 327.
Existence, *s.* reality, H. F. 266.
Exorsisaciouns, *pl.* exorcisms, spells to raise spirits, H. F. 1263.
Expans, *adj.* separate, F 1275.
Experience, *s.* experiment, H. F. 788.
Expert, *adj.* experienced, B 4; skilful in performing an experiment, experienced, G 1251.
Expoune, *v.* to expound, explain, B 3398; G 86; Expouned, *pt. s.* B 3399.
Extenden, *pr. pl.* are extended, B 461.
Extree, *s.* axle, As. i. 14, 2.
Ey, *interj.* eh! what! C 782.
Ey, *s.* egg, G 806.
Eye; *at eye*, evidently, L. 100.
Eyen, *pl.* eyes, M. P. i. 88; iii. 841.
Eyleth, *pr. s.* ails, B 1191; aileth, H 16; Eyled, *pt. s. impers.* ailed, F 501.
Eyr, *s.* heir, L. 1598, 1819.
Eyre, *s.* air, gas, G 767.
Eyrish, *adj.* of the air, aerial, H. F. 932, 965.
Eyth, *adj.* easy, R. 3955.
Eyther, *adj.* either, M. P. v. 125.

F.

Face, *s.* face; a technical term in astrology, signifying the third part of a sign (of the zodiac); a part of the zodiac ten degrees in extent, F 50.
Facound, *adj.* eloquent, fluent, M. P. v. 521.
Facounde, *s.* eloquence, fluency, M. P. iii. 926.
Faculte, *s.* faculty, branch of study, H. F. 248.
Fader, *s.* father, M. P. i. 52; *fader day*, father's day, father's time, B 3374; Fadres, *gen.* M. P. i. 130; fathers, ancestors, E 61; parents, originators, B 129; Fader, *gen. in phr.* fader kin = father's race, ancestry, G 829.
Fadme, *s. pl.* fathom (*s*), M. P. iii. 422.
Fadres-in-lawe, *pl.* parents-in-law, Bo. II. p. iii. 45.
Failen, *v.* fail, grow dim, M. P. v. 85.
Faille, *s.* fail; *sauns faille*, without fail, H. F. 188.
Fain, *adj.* glad, L. 1137.
Faire, *adv.* fairly, well, M. P. v. 503; prosperously, L. 277.
Faire Rewthelees, Fair Unpitying One, *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, M. P. vi. 31.
Fairnes, **Fairnesse**, *s.* fairness, beauty, M. P. iv. 76; E 384.
Fairye, *s.* fairyland, F 96; fairy contrivance, magic, F 201.
Fal, *s.* fall in wrestling, M. P. xiii. 16.
Falding, *s.* coarse cloth, A 391.
Fallaces, *s. pl.* fallacies, R. 7077.
Falle, *v.* happen, M. P. ii. 23; fall; *hence*, prosper, L. 186; happen, light, E 126; suit, E 259; Falles, *pr. s.* belongs, M. P. iii. 253; Falle, *pp.* fallen, L. 1726, 1826; happened, E 938;

pr. s. subj. impers. may it befall, L. 277; Fallen, *v.* happen, F 134; accidentally placed, F 684; **Fil**, *pt. s.* fell, C 804; Fel, befell, B 141. See **Fil**.

Fals, *adj.* false, B 74.

False, *v.* deceive, be untrue to, M. P. iii. 1234; Falsed, *pt. s.* betrayed, M. P. vii. 147; *pp.* falsified, broken (faith), F 627.

False get, cheating contrivance, G 1277.

Falsen, *v.* deceive, L. 1640; Falsest, 2 *pr. s.* L. 1377.

Falshede, *s.* falsehood, G 979.

Faltren, *pr. pl.* falter, fail, B 772.

Falwe-rede, *adj. pl.* yellowish red, H. F. 1936.

Falwes, *s. pl.* fallows, D 656.

Fame, *s.* good report, E 418.

Familer, *s.* familiar friend, Bo. IV. p. vi. 279.

Famulere, adj. familiar, affable, L. 1606.

Fan, *s.* vane, quintain, H 42.

Fantastyk, *adj.* imaginative, A 1376.

Fantasye, *s.* imagining, H. F. 992; fancy, H. F. 593; Fantasyes, *pl.* fancies, M. P. iii. 28.

Fantom, *s.* phantasm, kind of dream, illusion, H. F. 11.

Farced, *pp.* stuffed, L. 1373.

Fard, *imp.* paint, R. 2285.

Fardels, *s. pl.* burdens, R. 5683.

Fare, *s.* good speed, H. F. 682; proceeding, stir, H. F. 1065; *evel fare*, ill hap, M. P. ii. 62; fuss, disturbance, T. iii. 860; business, goings on, B 569.

Fare, *ger.* to fare, prosper, M. P. v. 698; 1 *pr. s.* I fare, it is with me (thus), M. P. vii. 320; go, G 733; am, B 1676; *pp.* gone, walked, L. 2209; gone, B 512; Fareth, *pr. s.* happens, H. F. 271; it turns out, G 966; it fares, it is, E 1217; Faren, 1 *pr. pl.* we fare, live, G 662; Far wel, *imp. s.* farewell, B 116.

Fare-cart, *s.* cart, T. v. 1162.

Farewel, *interj.* farewell! it is all over, G 907.

Fasoun, *s.* fashion, R. 708.

Faste, *adv.* fast, M. P. ii. 19; close, near, M. P. iii. 369; hard, soundly, M. P. v. 94; quickly, G 245; *as faste*, very quickly, G 1235; *faste by*, close at hand, B 3116.

Faster, *adv.* closer, B 3722.

Fattish, *adj.* plump, M. P. iii. 954.

Faucon, *s.* falcon, F 411, 424.

Fauconers, *s. pl.* falconers, F 1196.

Faught, *pt. s.* fought, B 3519.

Fauned, *pl. s.* fawned on, M. P. iii. 389.

Fawe, *adj.* fain, R. 6476; *adv.* T. iv. 887.

Fay, *s.* faith, R. 2887.

Fayle, *v.* make mistakes, R. 4949.

Fayn, *adv.* gladly, M. P. iii. 1102; gladly, willingly, B 41; wolde fayn = would fain, would be glad to; E 696.

Fayn, *adj.* glad, L. 130; H 92. See **Fain**.

Fayr, *adj.* fair, seemly, L. 2548; *a fayr*, a good one, T. iii. 850.

Feble, *adj.* feeble, weak, E 1198.

Fecche, *v.* to fetch, B 1857; Fecchen, E 276. See **Fette**.

Fecches, *s. pl.* vetches, T. iii. 936.

Feeld, *s.* field, in an heraldic sense, B 3573; Feld, *dat.* field, plain, B 3197.

Feend, *s.* the fiend, F 522.

Feendly, *adj.* fiendly, of a fiend, M. P. iii. 594.

Fees, *s. pl.* fees, contributions, payments, M. P. iii. 266.

Feet, *s.* performance, E 429.

Feffe, *v.* fee, present, T. iii. 901.

Feffed in, *pp.* invested with, E 1698.

Feined, *adj.* feigned, L. 1257.

Fel, *s.* skin, T. i. 91.

Fel, *pt. s.* befell, happened, B 141. See **Falle**.

Fel, *adj.* fell, cruel, terrible, B 2019.

Felawe, *s.* fellow, companion, L. 895.

Felawship, *s.* company, M. P. iii. 978.

Feld, *s.* field, M. P. iii. 359. See **Feeld**.

Feldefare, *s.* fieldfare, M. P. v. 364; T. iii. 851.

Fele, *adj.* many, R. 189; E 917.

Fele, *v.* understand by experiment, H. F. 826; Felte, 1 *pt. s.* felt, M. P. iv. 217; Feled, *pt. s.* M. P. iii. 492.

Fele-folde, *adj.* manifold, Bo. II. p. i. 18.

Feling, *s.* sentiment, *hence* love, M. P. iii. 1172.

Felle, *adj. pl.* cruel, T. i. 470. See **Fel**.

Felliche, *adj.* bitingly, severely, Bo. II. m. iii. 16.

Felly, *adv.* cruelly, R. 3251.

Felnesse, *s.* fierceness, Bo. I. m. vi. 12.

Felonous, *adj.* fierce, wicked, Bo. I. m. iv. 17.

Felonye, *s.* injustice, Bo. IV. p. vi. 305; crime, B 643.

Femenye, *s.* womankind, A 866.

Femininitee, *s.* feminine form, B 360.

Fen, *s.* chapter, or subdivision of Avicenna's book called the Canon, C 890.

Fend, *s.* fiend, foe, L. 1996. See **Feend**.

Fenix, *s.* phœnix, M. P. iii. 982.

Fer, *adv.* far, M. P. vii. 338; *how fer so*, however far, M. P. v. 440.

Fer, *adj.* far, B 508, 658.

Ferde, *s. dat.* (after *for*) fear, terror, H. F. 950; fear, T. i. 557.

Ferde, *pt. s.* fared, was, seemed, M. P. iii. 501; went on, H. F. 1522; 1 *pt. s.* fared, felt, M. P. iii. 99; was placed, M. P. v. 152; *pt. s.* fared, *i.e.* behaved, E 1068. See **Fare**.

Fere, *s.* companion, mate, M. P. v. 418; L. 969.

Fere, *s. dat.* fear, B 3369.

Fered, *pp.* terrified, afraid, G 924.

Ferforth, *adv.* far, M. P. vii. 90; *so ferforth*, to such an extent, M. P. i. 170; far, L. 690;

as ferforth as, as far as, B 1099; *so ferforth*, to such a degree, G 40. See Fer.
Ferforthly, *adv.* so far, L. 682.
Ferfulleste, *adj. sup.* most timorous, T. ii. 450.
Ferly, *adj.* wonderful, A 4173.
Fermacies, *s. pl.* pharmacies, medicines, A 2713.
Ferme, *imp. s.* make firm, Bo. I. m. v. 70.
Ferme, *adj.* firm, E 663.
Fermerere, *s.* keeper of the infirmary, D 1859.
Fermour, *s.* farmer of taxes, L. 378.
Fern, *adv.* long ago; so fern = so long ago, F 256.
Fern-asshen, *s. pl.* fern-ashes, ashes produced by burning ferns, F 254.
Ferne yere, past years, T. v. 1176.
Ferre, *adv. comp.* further, H. F. 600. See Fer.
Ferreste, *adj. super.* farthest, A 494.
Fers, *s.* queen (at chess), M. P. iii. 654.
Ferse, *adj. voc.* fierce, M. P. vii. 1.
Perses, *pl.* the pieces at chess, M. P. iii. 723.
Ferthe, fourth, B 823; G 531.
Ferther, *adv.* further, M. P. v. 280; *adj.* B 1686.
Ferther-over, *adv.* furthermore, T. iv. 1027.
Ferthing, *s.* morsel, A 134.
Fesaunt, *s.* pheasant, M. P. v. 357.
Fest, *s.* fist, C 802.
Feste, *s.* feast, festival, M. P. iii. 974; *maketh feste*, pays court, flatters, M. P. iii. 638; *to feste*, to the feast, at a feast, B 1007; *han to feste*, to invite, B 380.
Festeyinge, *pr. pt.* feasting, entertaining, F 345.
Festlich, *adj.* festive, fond of feasts, F 281.
Festne, *v.* fasten, A 195.
Fete, *s. pl. dat.* feet; *to fete*, at his feet, B 1104.
Fetis, *adj.* well-made, neat, graceful, C 478.
Fetisly, *adv.* neatly, skilfully, A 273.
Fette, *pt. s.* fetched, L. 676; Fet, *pp.* B 667.
Fettred, *pt. s.* fettered, B 3547.
Fey, *s.* faith, C 762; fidelity, L. 778.
Feyn, *adj.* glad, M. P. vii. 325.
Feyne, *v.* feign, speak falsely, M. P. ii. 4; Feyned, *pp.* pretended, F 524; *feyne us*, pretend as regards ourselves, B 351; Feigne, *whoso feigne may*, let him, who can, pretend, Bo. III. p. x. 104.
Feyning, *s.* pretending, cajolery, F 556.
Feynting, *s.* fainting, failing, E 970.
Feyntyse, *s.* feigning, R. 2947, 2998.
Feyth, *s.* faith, M. P. iii. 632.
Fiaunce, *s.* confidence, R. 5481.
Ficchen, *ger.* to fix, Bo. V. m. iv. 20.
Fiers, *adj.* fierce, R. 1482.
Fifte, fifth, M. P. xvi. 9.
Figure, *s.* shape, *i.e.* man's shape or form, M. P. xvi. 27; Figures, *pl.* figures of speech, E 16.
Figuringe, *s.* formation, form, L. 298; similitude, figure, G 96.
Fil, *pt. s.* fell, M. P. iii. 123; befell, L. 589; *pt. s. impers.* befell, L. 1162; was fitting, M. P. iii. 374; *pt. s.* fell, occurred, happened, B 1865; as fer as reason fil = as far as reason extended, F 570; Fille, *pt. pl.* fell, H. F. 1659; Fillen, fell, B 3183. See Falle.
Fild, *pp.* filled. M. P. v. 610.
Fille, *s.* fill, M. P. vi. 13; L. 817.
Fingres, *s. pl.* fingers, E 380.
Firste, *adj. used as a s.*; my firste = my first narration, F 75.
Fish, *s.* the sign Pisces, F 273.
Fit, *s.* a 'fyt' or 'passus,' a portion of a song, B 2078.
Fithele, *s.* fiddle, A 296.
Fix, Fixe, *pp.* fixed, solidified, M. P. i. 9; G 779.
Flambes, *s. pl.* flames, B 3353; G 515.
Flater, 1 *pr. s.* flatter, M. P. iv. 188.
Flateringe, *s.* flattery, M. P. iii. 639.
Flaume, *s.* flame, M. P. v. 250; Flaumbe, H. F. 769.
Flayn, *pp.* flayed, I 425.
Flee, *v.* flee, M. P. iv. 98; Fleen, flee, M. P. i. 148; Fleigh, *pt. s.* fled, B 3879; Fledde herself, *pt. s. refl.* took refuge, L. 1225.
Flee, *v.* fly, F 503.
Fleen, *s. pl.* fleas, H 17.
Flees, *s.* fleece, L. 1428, 1647.
Fleet, *pr. s.* floats, B 463. See Flete.
Fleigh, *pt. s.* flew, T. ii. 194; Fleinge, *pres. pt.* flying, H. F. 543.
Flekked, *pp.* spotted, G 565.
Flemen, *v.* put to flight, T. ii. 852; Flemeth, *pr. s.* chases away, H 182; Flemed, *pt. s.* exiled, R. 3052; *pp.* banished, G 58.
Flemer, *s.* banisher, driver away, B 460.
Flete, 1 *pr. s.* float, M. P. ii. 110; Fleteth, flows, abounds, Bo. I. m. ii. 31; Fletinge, *pres. pt.* flowing, Bo. I. p. iii. 89.
Flex, *s.* flax, A 676.
Flitting, *adj.* fleeting, unimportant. M. P. iii. 801.
Flo, *s.* dart, H 264.
Flokmele, *adv.* in a flock, in a great number, E 86.
Flood, *s.* flood, flowing of the sea, F 259.
Florouns, *s. pl.* florets, L. 217, 220.
Floteren, *pr. pl.* fluctuate, waver, Bo. III. p. xi. 258.
Flotery, *adj.* dishevelled, A 2883.
Flour, *s.* flower, L. 48; *of alle floures flour*, flower of all flowers, M. P. i. 4; flower, prime vigor, M. P. iii. 630; choice, pattern, E 919.
Floure, *pr. s. subj.* flower, flourish, E 120.
Floureth, *pr. s.* comes forth into flower, M. P. vii. 306.

Floute, *s.* flute, H. F. 1223.
Flowen, *pp.* flown, H. F. 905.
Floytinge, *pres. pt.* fluting, A 91.
Fneseth, *pr. s.* breathes heavily, puffs, snorts, H 62.
Foison, *s.* abundance, B 504.
Foles, *pl.* fools, L. (A) 315.
Folily, *adv.* foolishly, R. 2603.
Folk, *s.* sort, company, M. P. v. 524; Folkes, *pl.* companies of people, M. P. v. 278.
Folwe, 1 *pr. s.* follow, M. P. iii. 585; Folowed wel, followed as a matter of course, M. P. iii. 1012; Folwen, *pr. pl.* follow, C 514; Folweth, *imp. pl.* follow, imitate, E 1189.
Foly, Folye, *s.* folly, M. P. iii. 620; E 236.
Foly, *adv.* foolishly, M. P. iii. 874.
Folyen, *pr. pl.* act foolishly, Bo. III. p. ii. 112.
Fome. See **Foom.**
Fomy, *adj.* covered with foam, L. 1208.
Fond, *pt. s.* found, M. P. ii. 14.
Fond, *pp.* fooled, R. 5367.
Fonde, *v.* try, endeavor, M. P. iii. 1020; try to persuade, B 347; attempt, try, E 283. See **Founde.**
Fonge, *v.* to receive, B 377.
Fonne, *s.* fool, A 4089.
Font-ful water, fontful of water, B 357.
Fontstoon, *s.* font, B 723.
Foo, *s.* foe, M. P. v. 339; Foos, foes, *pl.* M. P. ii. 55; Foon, *pl.* M. P. v. 103.
Fool, *adj.* foolish, M. P. v. 505.
Fool, *s.* a fool, employed to make sport, B 3271.
Fool-hardinesse, *s.* foolish daring, M. P. v. 227.
Foom, *s.* foam, G 564; Fome, *dat.* G 565.
Foo-men, *s. pl.* foes, B 3255, 3507.
Foon, Foos. See **Foo.**
Foot-brede, *s.* foot-breadth, H. F. 2042.
Foot-hot, *adv.* instantly, on the spot, B 438.
For, *conj.* because, M. P. iii. 735, 789; in order that, B 478; F 102.
For, *prep.* in respect of, M. P. v. 336; in spite of, notwithstanding, M. P. iii. 535; *for my dethe*, were I to die for it, for fear of my death, M. P. iv. 186; For to, *with infin.* to, M. P. iv. 94, *et passim;* for the sake of, Bo. IV. p. vi. 207; against, T. i. 928; against; in order to avoid, L. 231; for me = by my means, F 357.
Forage, *s.* forage, food, B 1973.
Forbede, *pr. s. subj.* may forbid, M. P. v. 582; Forbode, *pp.* forbidden, M. P. xvi. 17; Forbad, *pt. s.* forbade, E 570; Forbedeth, *pr. s.* forbids, C 643.
For-bereth, *imp. pl.* forgive, L. 80.
Forbode, *s.* prohibition; *goddes forbode*, it is God's prohibition (*i.e.* God forbid), L. (A) 10.
Forbrak, 1 *pt. s.* broke off, interrupted, Bo. IV. p. i. 7.
For-by, *adv.* past, L 2539.
Forbyse, *v.* exemplify, T. ii. 1390.
Force: *no force*, no matter, M. P. xviii. 53. See **Fors.**
Forcracchen, *v.* scratch, R. 323.
For-dide, *pt. s.* slew, L. 2557; Fordoon, *pp.* slain, L. 939.
For-do, *v.* destroy, T. i. 238; *pp.* destroyed, M. P. ii. 86; T. i. 74; Fordone, *pp.* destroyed, ruined, R. 4339.
Fordoon, *v.* to do for, to destroy, B 369.
Fordriven, *pp.* driven about, Bo. I. p. iii. 81.
For-dronke, *pp.* very drunk, C 674.
Fordrye, *adj.* very dry, exceedingly dry, withered up, F 409.
Fordwyned, *pp.* wasted, R. 366.
Fore, *s.* course, D 1935.
Foresteres, *s. pl.* foresters, M. P. iii. 361.
Foreyne, *adj.* extraneous, Bo. III. p. iii. 76.
Foreyne, *s.* outer chamber, L 1962.
Forfare, *v.* fare ill, R. 5778.
For-fered, *pp.* exceedingly afraid; *forfered of*, very afraid for, F 527.
Forgaf, *pt. s.* forgave, L. 162.
Forgift, *s.* forgiveness, L. 1853.
For-go, *pp.* overwalked, exhausted with walking, H. F. 115.
Forgo, *v.* forego, give up, leave alone, L. (A) 312; lost, M. P. iv. 256.
Forgoon, *v.* forgo, G 610.
Forheved, *s.* forehead, Bo. I. p. iv. 157.
Forlete, *v.* to leave, yield up, B 1848; to give up, C 864.
Forliven, *v.* degenerate, Bo. III. p. vi. 61; Forlived, *pp. as adj.* degenerate, ignoble, Bo. III. m. vi. 15.
Forlorn, *pp.* lost, L. 2663.
Forloyn, *s.* note on a horn for recall, M. P. iii. 386.
Forme-fader, *s.* first father, B 2293.
Formel, *s.* companion (said of birds), M. P. v. 371, 373.
Formest, *adj. sup.* foremost, M. P. iii. 890.
Forncast, *pp.* planned, I 448.
Forneys, *s.* furnace, A 559.
Forpampred, *pp.* exceedingly pampered, spoilt by pampering, M. P. ix. 5.
For-pyned, *pp.* exhausted with suffering, L. 2428.
Fors, *s.* matter, consequence, M. P. v. 615; *no fors*, no matter, never mind, M. P. iii. 502; *no fors of me*, no matter about me, M. P. iv. 197; *therof no fors*, no matter for that, never mind that, M. P. iii. 1170; *I do no fors*, I don't care, M. P. xi. 31; *I do no fors therof*, it is no matter to me, M. P. iii. 542; *make no fors*, take no heed, H 68. See **Force.**
Forsake, *v.* deny, Bo. I. p. iv. 185.
Forsake, *v.* to forsake, leave, B 3431.

Forshapen, *pp.* misshapen, T. ii. 66.

For-shright, *pp.* tired with shrieking, T. iv. 1147.

Forsleuthen, *v.* over-tarry, B 4286.

For-sleweth, *pr. s.* is over-slothful, I 685.

For-sluggeth, *pr. s.* is over-sluggish, I 685.

Forsongen, *pp.* exhausted with singing, R. 664.

Forster, *s.* forester, A 117.

For-straught, *pp.* exhausted, B 1295.

Forsweringe, *s.* forswearing, swearing falsely, H. F. 153.

Forswor him, *pt. s.* forswore himself, was forsworn, H. F. 389.

For-sworn, *pp.* forsworn, L. 1259.

Forth, *adv.* on, M. P. v. 27; out, M. P. v. 352; forth, F 605; *used as v.* = go forth, F 604.

Forthenke, *v.* repent, R. 3957.

Forthering, *s.* furtherance, aid, L. (A) 69.

Forthermo, *adv.* moreover, C 594.

Forther over, *adv.* furthermore, moreover, C 648.

Forthest, *adj. and adv.* furthest, Bo. IV. p. vi. 148.

For-thinke, *v.* repent, T. ii. 1414.

Forthren, *v.* further, help, L. 71; *ger.* to assist, L. 1618; Forthred, *pp.* helped, L. 413.

Forth-right, *adv.* straight, directly, F 1503.

Forthward, *adv.* forward, B 263.

For-thy, *adv.* therefore, A 1841.

Fortuit, *adj.* fortuitous, Bo. V. p. i. 102.

Fortuned, *pt. pl.* happened, chanced, M. P. iii. 288; *pp.* endowed by fortune, M. P. iv. 180.

Fortunel, *adj.* accidental, Bo. V. m. i. 18.

Fortunen, *v.* presage, A 417.

Fortunous, *adj.* fortuitous, accidental, Bo. I. p. vi. 11.

For-waked, *pp.* weary through watching, M. P. iii. 126; B 596.

Forwandred, *pp.* tired with wandering, R. 3336.

Forward, *s.* agreement, L. 2500; promise, B 40.

Forwelked, *pp.* withered, R. 361.

Forweped, *pp.* weary, exhausted through weeping, M. P. iii. 126.

Forwered, *pp.* worn out, R. 235.

For-wery, *adj.* worn out with weariness, very tired, M. P. v. 93.

Forwes, *pl.* furrows, M. P. ix. 12.

Forwhy, *conj.* because, M. P. iii. 461.

For-witer, *s.* foreknower, Bo. V. p. vi. 369.

Forwiting, *s.* foreknowledge, B 4433.

For wood, *adj.* extremely mad, furious, L. 2420.

Forwot, *pr. s.* hath foreknowledge of, H. F. 45.

Forwrapped, *pp.* wrapped up, C 718.

Foryaf, *pt. s.* forgave, respited, T. iii. 1577.

Foryede, *pt. s.* forwent, desisted from, T. ii. 1330.

Foryelde, *pr. s. subj.* may (he) requite, reward, L. 457.

Foryete, *v.* forget, M. P. iii. 1125.

Foryetful, *adj.* forgetful, B 472.

Foryetinge, *s.* forgetfulness, Bo. II. p. vii. 106.

For-yeve, *v.* forgive, M. P. iii. 1284; *pt. pl.* forgave, L. 1848; For-yive, *imp. s.* forgive, M. P. iii. 525; given up, M. P. iii. 877; Foryeven, *pp. used absolutely*, being forgiven, M. P. v. 82.

Fostred, *pp.* nurtured, brought (up), G 1281; nurtured in the faith, G 539; nurtured, kept, E 1043.

Fote, *s.* a foot; *on fote*, on foot, F 590.

Fother, *s.* cartload, A 530.

Fot-hoot, *adv.* hastily, immediately, M. P. iii. 375.

Foudre, *s.* thunderbolt, H. F. 535.

Foul, *adj.* foul, bad; *for foul ne fair*, by foul means or fair, B 585; Foule, *adj.* poor, wretched, B 4003.

Foul, *s.* bird, fowl, M. P. iv. 13.

Foule, *adv.* foully, M. P. iii. 623; v. 517; foully, shamefully, L. 1307.

Fouler, *s.* fowler, L. 132.

Founde, *v.* seek after, M. P. vii. 241; 1 *pr. s.* try, endeavor, M. P. vii. 47; Founden, *pp.* found, M. P. iii. 73; provided, B 243.

Foundement, *s.* foundation, H. F. 1132.

Foundred, *pt. s.* fell, A 2687.

Founes, *s. pl.* fawns, M. P. iii. 429.

Foure, four, B 491.

Fourneys, *s.* furnace, B 3353.

Foynen, *pres. pl.* thrust, A 2654.

Foyson, *s.* abundance, A 3165.

Fraknes, *s. pl.* freckles, A 2169.

Franchyse, *s.* liberality, M. P. xviii. 59.

Frankeleyn, *s.* franklin, F 675.

Frape, *s.* company, T. iii. 410.

Fraught, *pp.* freighted, B 171.

Fraunchyse, *s.* liberality, B 3854.

Frayneth, *pr. s.* prays, beseeches, B 1793.

Fre, *adj.* noble, good, bounteous, liberal, M. P. iii. 484; *as s.* noble one, M. P. vi. 104; profuse, E 1209.

Fredom, *s.* liberality, bounty, M. P. iv. 175.

Freele, *adj.* frail, Bo. III. p. x. 39.

Frendes, *s. pl.* friends, B 269.

Freletee, *s.* frailty, E 1160.

Fremde, foreign, F 429.

Frere, *s.* friar, M. P. xix. 19.

Fret, *s.* ornament, L. 215, 228.

Frete, *v.* devour, swallow up, M. P. vii. 12; *pp.* eaten, devoured, B. 475; Freten, *pp.* devoured, A 2068.

Fretted, *pp.* adorned, L. 1117.

Freyned, *pp.* asked, questioned, G 433.

Fro, *prep.* from, M. P. ii. 116; out of, M. P. iv. 254; in fear of, T. i. 748.

Frosty, *adj.* which accompanies frost, M. P. v. 364; frosty, cold, L. 878.

Froteth, *pr. s.* rubs, A 3747.

Frounced, *pp.* wrinkled, R. 365.

Frounceles, *adj.* unwrinkled, R. 860.

Frount, *s.* true countenance, Bo. II. p. viii. 8.
Fructifye, *v.* produce fruit, M. P. xvi. 48.
Fructuous, *adj.* fruitful, I 73.
Fruyt, *s.* result (lit. fruit), B 411.
Fruytesteres, *s. pl. fem.* fruit-sellers, C 478.
Fugitif, *adj.* fleeing from, H. F. 146.
Ful, *adj.* full, B 86.
Ful, *adv.* very, quite, M. P. ii. 33; very, B 3506; *ful many*, very many, F 128.
Fulfild, *pp.* filled full, quite full, M. P. v. 89; fulfilled, E 596; completed, fully performed, I 17.
Fulfille, *v.* fulfil; Fulfuldest, 2 *pt. s.* didst satisfy, Bo. II. p. iii. 72.
Fulle; *at the fulle*, completely, M. P. iii. 899.
Fulliche, *adv.* fully, E 706.
Fulsomnesse, *s.* satiety, profuseness, F 405.
Fumetere, *s.* the herb fumitory, B 4153.
Fumositee, *s.* fumes arising from drunkenness, C 567; F 358.
Furial, *adj.* tormenting, F 448.
Furlong, *s.* furlong, *hence* time of walking a furlong, one-eighth part of twenty minutes, two minutes and a half, M. P. vii. 328; Furlong-way, H. F. 2064; Furlong-wey, L. 307.
Furthering, *s.* helping, M. P. v. 384.
Furthre, *v.* help, H. F. 2023.
Fusible, *adj.* fusible, capable of being fused, G 856.
Fy! *interj.* fie! M. P. iii. 1115.
Fyf, five, B 3602.
Fyle, *v.* file, smooth by filing, M. P. v. 212.
Fyn, *s.* end, M. P. iv. 218; end, purpose, result, B 3348, 3884.
Fynal, *adj.* final, L. 2101.
Fyne, *adj. pl.* fine, good, F 640.
Fyne, *v.* finish, cease, stop, T. iv. 26.
Fynt, *pr. s.* findeth, finds, L. 1499.
Fyr, *s.* fire, B 3734.
Fyry, *adj.* fiery, M. P. iv. 27.
Fysicien, *s.* physician, Bo. I. p. iii. 5.

G.

Gabbe, *v. pr. s.* speak idly, lie, M. P. iii. 1075; *v.* talk idly, gossip, T. iii. 301.
Gadeling, *s.* vagabond, R. 938.
Gadrede, *pt. s.* gathered, A 824.
Gaillard, Gaylard, *adj.* gay, merry, A 4367, 3336.
Galantyne, *s.* a kind of sauce, M. P. ix. 18.
Galaxye, *s.* the galaxy, Milky Way, M. P. v. 56; H. F. 938.
Gale, *v.* cry out, D 832.
Galianes, *s. pl.* medicines, C 306.
Galingale, *s.* sweet cypress root, A 381.
Galle, *s.* gall, M. P. x. 35; B 3537; G 58, 797; **Galles**, *pl.* feelings of envy, M. P. ix. 47.
Galoche, *s.* a shoe, F 555.
Galoun, *s.* gallon, H 24.
Galping, *pres. pl.* gaping, F 350.
Galwes, *s. pl.* gallows, B 3924, 3941.
Game, *s.* sport, M. P. xxii. 61; game, amusement, L. 489; joke, E 733.
Gan, *pt. s.* began, M. P. i. 133; ii. 19; *but commonly used as a mere auxiliary*, did, M. P. i. 92. *Pt. t. of ginnen.*
Ganeth, *pr. s.* yawneth, H 35.
Gapeth, *pr. s.* opens his mouth, L. 2004.
Gapinges, *s. pl.* greedy wishes, Bo. II. m. ii. 18.
Gargat, *s.* throat, B 4525.
Garisoun, *v.* cure, R. 3249.
Garnisoun, *s.* garrison, B 2217.
Gas, goes, A 4037.
Gastnesse, *s.* terror, Bo. III. p. v. 32.
Gat, *pt. s.* got, obtained, M. P. vii. 206; L. 1649.
Gat-tothed, *adj.* goat-toothed, lascivious, A 468.
Gaude, *s.* trick, course of trickery, C 389.
Gauren, *ger.* to gaze, stare, B 912; Gaureth, *pr. s.* gazes, stares, B 3559.
Gayl, *s.* jail, R. 4745.
Gayler, *s.* jailer, B 3615; Gaylere, L. 2051.
Gayneth, *pr. s.* availeth, A 1787.
Gaytres beryies, berries of the dogwood tree, B 4155.
Geaunt, *s.* giant, M. P. v. 344; B 1997.
Gebet, *s.* gibbet, gallows, H. F. 106.
Geere. See **Gere**.
Gendres, *pl.* kinds, H. F. 18.
General, *adj.* with wide sympathies, liberal, M. P. iii. 990.
Gent, *adj.* refined, exquisite, noble, M. P. v. 558; B 1905. Short for *gentil*.
Genterye, *s.* nobility, magnanimity, L. 394.
Gentil, *adj.* gentle, worthy, B 1627; excellent, B 3123; compassionate, F 483; Gentils, *pl. s.* people of gentle birth, 'the noble folk,' M. P. vii. 67; C 323; E 480.
Gentilesse, *s.* nobility of nature and behavior, courtesy, M. P. ii. 68; L. 870; Gentillesse, kindness, G 1054; condescension, B 853; nobleness, B 3441; F 483, 505; nobility, B 3854; worth, E 96; slenderness, symmetry, F 426; delicate nurture, E 593.
Gentileste, *adj. sup.* most beautiful, most delicate, M. P. v. 373.
Gentilleste, *adv.* noblest, E 72.
Gentilly, *adv.* courteously, B 1093; in a frank or noble manner, frankly, F 674.
Geomancie, *s.* divination by figures made on the earth, I 605.
Geometriens, *s. pl.* geometricians, Bo. III. p. x. 161.
Gere, *s.* changeable manner, M. P. iii. 1257.
Gere, *s.* gear, property, B 800; gear, clothing, E 372.

Gerful, *adj.* changeable, T. iv. 286.

Gerland, *s.* garland, G 27.

Gery, *adj.* changeable, A 1536.

Gesse, 1 *pr. s.* suppose, M. P. iv. 195; B 246; think, L. 893; Gessing, *pres. pt.* intending, L. 363.

Cessinge, *s.* opinion, Bo. I. p. iv. 351.

Gest, *s.* guest, H. F. 288.

Geste, *s.* romance, story, T. iii. 450; L. (A) 87; a stock story; in *geste*, like the common stock stories, B 2123; Gestes, *pl.* stories, B 1126; F 211.

Gestes (*g* as *j*), *pl.* doings, deeds, H. F. 1434.

Gestiours (*g* as *j*), *pl.* story-tellers, H. F. 1198; Gestours, B 2036.

Get, *s.* contrivance, G 1277.

Geten, *ger.* to get, obtain, L. 1358; *pp. han geten hem*, to have acquired for themselves, F 56; gotten, obtained, won, L. 1753; Gete, 2 *pr. pl. as fut.* will get, M. P. v. 651; *pp.* obtained, M. P. iv. 265. See Gat.

Gif, *conj.* if, A 4181.

Gigges (*g* as *j*), *pl.* rapid movements, H. F. 1942.

Gigginge, *pres. pt.* strapping, A 2504.

Gilden, *adj.* of gold, golden, M. P. iii. 338.

Gilt, *s.* guilt, M. P. i. 178.

Giltelees, *adj.* guiltless, B 643; Giltelees, B 1062; Giltles, L. 2092.

Gin, *s.* contrivance, L. 1784; snare, contrivance, G 1165; Ginne, engine, contrivance, R. 4176.

Gingebreed, *s.* gingerbread, B 2044.

Ginne, *v.* begin, attempt, H. F. 2004; Ginnen, *pr. pl.* begin, L. 38.

Ginning, *s.* beginning, M. P. xxii. 80.

Gipoun, *s.* short vest, A 75.

Girdel, *s.* a girdle, B 1921.

Girden, *v.* to strike, B 3736.

Girt, *pr. s.* girdeth, M. P. iv. 100; girdeth, girds, L. 1775.

Gisarme, *s.* halberd, R. 5978.

Giser, *s.* gizzard, liver, Bo. III. m. xii. 52.

Giternes, *s. pl.* guitars, C 466.

Glade, *adj. pl.* glad, M. P. iii. 601.

Glade, *v.* gladden, cheer, M. P. iii. 563; to make glad, comfort, cheer, B 4001; Gladen, *ger.* to rejoice, M. P. v. 687; Gladde, *v.* cheer, relieve, M. P. iii. 702; Gladeth, *imp. pl.* rejoice, M. P. iv. 1.

Gladly, *adv.* by preference, L. 770; willingly, F 224; *that been gladly wyse*, that wish to be thought wise, F 376.

Gladsom, *adj.* pleasant, B 3968.

Glareth, *pr. s.* glistens, H. F. 272.

Glas, *s.* glass, F 254.

Glase, *v.* glaze, T. v. 469. See Howve.

Glasing, *s.* glazing, M. P. iii. 327.

Glede, *s.* a burning coal, B 111, 3574.

Gledy, *adj.* glowing, burning, L. 105.

Glee, *s.* glee, singing, joy, M. P. i. 100; entertainment, B 2030.

Gleed, *s.* glowing coal, L. 735.

Glente, *pt. s.* glanced, T. iv. 1223.

Glewe, *v.* fasten, glue, H. F. 1761.

Gleyre, *s.* white (of an egg), G 806.

Glood, *pt. s.* glided, went quickly, B 2094.

Glose, *s.* comment, L. 328; glosing, comment, F 166.

Glose, *v.* to flatter, B 3330; I 45; Glosen, to comment upon, B 1180.

Glotoun, *s.* glutton, M. P. v. 610, 613.

Gloumbe, *v.* frown, R. 4356.

Glyde, *v.* glide, M. P. iv. 53; *up glyde*, to rise up gradually, F 373; to glide, ascend, G 402. See Glood.

Gnow, *pt. s.* gnawed, B 3638.

Goddes, *pl.* gods, M. P. iii. 1328; *gen. sing.* God's, B 1166.

Gode, *adj. fem. s.* good, M. P. iii. 948.

Gode, *s.* property, wealth, L. 2638.

Gold-bete, adorned with beaten gold, gilt, M. P. vii. 24.

Golee, *s.* gabble, lit. mouthful, M. P. v. 556.

Golet, *s.* throat, gullet, C 543.

Gomme, *s.* gum, L. 121.

Gon, *v.* go, proceed, F 200; walk, L. 1399; Gooth, *pr. s.* goes, B 385; Goost, 2 *pr. s.* goest, walkest about, B 3123; Goon, *pr. pl.* go, proceed, E 898; Goon, *pp.* gone, B 17; *goon is many a yere*, many a year ago, B 132; Go, 2 *pr. pl.* ye walk, go on foot, C 748. See Goon.

Gonfanoun, *s.* pennon, banner, R. 1201.

Gonne, *s.* gun, cannon, H. F. 1643; missile, L. 637.

Gonne, *pt. pl.* did; *gonne arace*, did tear away, removed, E 1103. See Gan.

Good, *s.* goods, property, wealth, G 831.

Goodely, *adv.* kindly, M. P. iii. 1283.

Goodlich, *adj.* kind, bountiful, G 1053.

Goodlihede, *s.* goodliness, M. P. iii. 829; Goodliheed, goodly seeming, H. F. 330; a goodly outside, H. F. 274.

Goodly, *adj.* good, proper, pleasing, right, B 3969; good-looking, portly, B 4010.

Good-man, *s.* master of the house, C 361.

Goon, *v.* go, M. P. iii. 145; *lete it goon*, let it go, neglect it, G 1475; *pp.* gone, L. 792; Gost, 2 *pr. s.* goest, L. 926; Go, *v.* walk about, roam, L. 2066; *pr. s. subj.* may walk, L. 2069. See Gon.

Goos, *s.* goose, M. P. v. 358.

Goosish, *adj.* foolish, T. iii. 584.

Goost. See Gon.

Goost, *s.* a ghost, B 3124; spirit, T. iv. 187; the

Holy Ghost, B 1660; *yaf up the goost*, died, B 1862. See Gost.
Goot, *s.* a goat, G 886.
Gossomer, *s.* gossamer, F 259.
Gost, *s.* spirit, soul, M. P. i. 56; spirit, M. P i. 93; spirit, mind, L. 103; *yeldeth up the gost*, gives up the ghost, L. 886; ghost (ironically), H 55; the Holy Ghost, G 328; Goste, *dat.* M. P. xiv. 10. See Goost.
Gost. See Goon.
Gostly, *adv.* spiritually, mystically, G 109.
Goter, *s.* gutter, T. iii. 787; gutter, channel for water, L. 2705.
Goth, *pr. s.* goes, M. P. i. 68; *imp. pl.* go, B 3384. See Gon.
Governaille, *s.* management, mastery, E 1192.
Governance, *s.* government, B 287; providence, E 1161; arrangement, plan, E 994; Governaunce, *s.* control, M. P. iv. 44; care, M. P. iii. 1286; self-control, M. P. ii. 41; rule, government, C 600; sovereignty, B 3541; *his governaunce*, the way to manage him, F 311.
Governe, *v.* govern, control, B 3587; Governeth, *imp. pl.* arrange, E 322.
Governeresse, *s. fem.* governor, ruler, mistress, M. P. i. 141; ii. 80.
Governour, *s.* governor, master, principal, B 3130.
Grace, *s.* grace, honor, distinction, M. P. v. 45; *harde grace*, hard favor, displeasure, severity, M. P. v. 65; favor, kindness, F 458; favor, G 1348; *hir grace*, her favor (*i.e.* that of the blessed Virgin), B 980; pardon, B 647; *of grace*, out of favor, in kindness, F 161.
Gracelees, *adj.* void of grace, unfavored by God, G 1078.
Grame, *s.* grief, sorrow, M. P. vii. 276; harm, anger, T. iii. 1028.
Grant mercy, much thanks, G 1380.
Grapenel, *s.* grapnel, L. 640.
Gras, *s.* grace, B 2021. See Grace.
Gras, *s.* grass, F 153.
Graspe, *v.* grope, T. v. 223.
Graunges, *pl.* granges, barns, granaries, H. F. 698.
Graunten, *v.* grant, fix, name, E 179; Graunted, *pt. s.* E 183; *graunted him*, agreed to what he said, L. 2665.
Grave, *ger.* to engrave, M. P. xxiii. 5; Graven, *pp.* engraved, graven, H. F. 195; R. 4799; Grave, H. F. 157.
Grave, *v.* dig; *doth she grave*, she causes to be dug, L. 678; bury, E 681; Graven, *pp.* buried, L. 785.
Grayn, *s.* dye; *in grayn*, in dye, *i.e.* dyed of a fast color, B 1917. See Greyn.
Gree, *s.* good will, M. P. xviii. 73.
Gree, *s.* degree, rank, L. 1313; gratitude, good part, E 1151.
Greet, *adj.* great, M. P. iii. 954. See Grete.
Grene, *adj.* green, fresh, M. P. xi. 5; moss-covered, M. P. v. 122; *as s.* green clothing (the color of inconstancy), M. P. xxi. 7; greenery, greenness, F 54; greenness, living evidence, G 90.
Grenehede, *s.* greenness, wantonness, B 163.
Gres, *s.* grass, T. ii. 515; Greses, *pl.* grasses, H. F. 1353.
Gret, *adj.* great, F 463. See Greet, Grete.
Grete, *adj. as s.*; *the grete*, the chief part, essential part, substance, M. P. iii. 1242; v. 35; the chief part, L. 574, 1693. See Greet.
Grete see, *s.* the Mediterranean, R. 2748.
Grette, 1 *pt. s.* greeted, M. P. iii. 503; L. 116.
Gretter, *adj. comp.* greater, E 1126.
Grevaunce, *s.* grievance, complaint (against us), M. P. i. 63; discomfort, M. P. v. 205; affliction, M. P. x. 47; grievance, hardship, B 3703.
Greve, *v.* to grieve, vex, B 1638; Greveth, *pr. s. impers.* it vexes, it grieves, E 647: Greved, *pp.* L. 127.
Greves, *s. pl.* groves, M. P. iii. 417.
Grevous, *adj.* grievous, M. P. i. 20.
Greyn, *s.* a grain, B 1852; *in greyn*, in grain, *i.e.* of a fast color, F 511.
Grille, *adj.* rough, R. 73.
Grint, *pr. s.* grindeth, H. F. 1798.
Grisel, *s.* name given to an old man, whose hair is gray (lit. old horse), M. P. xvi. 35.
Grisly, *adj.* terrible, awful, M. P. vii. 3; B 3299; grewsome, C 473.
Grobbe, *v.* dig, grub up, M. P. ix. 29.
Groffe, *adv.* prone, face downwards, R. 2561.
Grome, *s.* man; *grome and wenche*, man and woman, H. F. 206; Gromes, *pl.* men, R. 200.
Grond, *pt. s.* ground, M. P. ix. 15.
Gronte, *pt. s.* groaned, B 3899.
Grotes, *s. pl.* groats, fourpenny pieces, C 376.
Grucche, *v.* to murmur, E 170; *grucche it*, to murmur at it, E 354.
Gruf, *adv.* grovellingly, all along, flat down, B 1865.
Grys, *s.* gray, G 559.
Guerdon, *s.* guerdon, reward, L. 1662; Guerdoun, H. F. 619.
Guerdon, *v.* reward, L. 2052.
Guerdoning, *s.* reward-giving, reward, M. P. v. 455.
Gunne, *pt. pl. aux.* did, M. P. v. 193. See Gan.
Gyde, *s.* guide, wielder, M. P. v. 136; ruler, G 45.
Gyde, *imp. s.* may (He) guide, B 245.
Gyderesse, *s.* conductress, Bo. IV. p. i. 11.
Gye, *v.* guide, conduct (myself), L. 2045; guide, rule, B 3587; *ger.* to guide, regulate, I 13.
Gyle, *s.* guile, M. P. iii. 620.

Gyse, *s.* way, L. (A) 105; guise, wise, way, manner, F 332; *in his gyse*, as he was wont, B 790.

H.

Haberdassher, *s.* seller of hats, A 361.
Habergeoun, *s.* a habergeon, hauberk, A 2119.
Habitacle, *s.* habitable space, Bo. II. p. vii. 65; Habitacles, *pl.* niches, H. F. 1194.
Haboundaunce, *s.* plenty, M. P. x. 29.
Haboundaunt, *pres. pt.* abounding, Bo. III. p. ii. 35.
Habounde, *v.* to abound, B 3938.
Haboundinge, *pres. pt.* abounding, M. P. i. 135.
Habundant, *adj.* abundant, E 59.
Hacches, *pl.* hatches, L. 648.
Haf, *pt. s.* heaved, A 3470.
Hainselins, *s. pl.* smocks, I 422.
Haire, *s.* hair shirt, R. 438.
Hakeney, *s.* hack-horse, hackney, G 559.
Hale, *v.* draw, attract, M. P. v. 151; Haleth, *pr. s.* draws back, M. P. i. 68.
Half, *s.* side, H. F. 1136; Halfe, *dat.* M. P. v. 125; *on my halfe*, from me, M. P. iii. 139; *a goddes halfe*, for God's sake, M. P. iii. 370, 758.
Half-goddes, *pl.* demi-gods, L. 387.
Halke, *s.* corner, hiding-place, L. 1780.
Halp, *pt. s.* helped, B 3236.
Hals, *s.* neck, M. P. v. 458; H. F. 394; *cut the hals*, cut in the throat, L. (A) 292.
Halse, 1 *pr. s.* I conjure, B 1835.
Halt, *pr. s.* holdeth, holds, B 807; F 61; performs, M. P. iii. 62; considers, H. F. 630; remains firm, M. P. x. 38.
Halts, *pr. s.* halts, goes lame, M. P. iii. 622; Halten, *v.* limp, T. iv. 1457.
Halve, *adj. pl.* half, M. P. xxiii. 2.
Halvendel, *adv.* half, T. iii. 707.
Halwed, *pp.* accounted holy, T. iii. 268; *pt. s.* consecrated, hallowed, G 551.
Halwes, *s. pl.* saints (apostles), M. P. iii. 831; lit. holy ones, B 1060; *gen. pl.* of (all) saints, G 1244.
Halydayes, *pl.* holy days, festivals, A 3952; I 667.
Hameled, *pp.* mutilated, cut off, T. ii. 964.
Hamers, *pl.* hammers, M. P. iii. 1164.
Han, *v.* have, R. 4657; keep, retain, C 725; take away, C 727; obtain, G 234.
Hande-brede, *s.* hand-breadth, A 3811.
Hap, *s.* chance, luck, M. P. v. 402; luck, B 3928; G 1209; fortune, good fortune, M. P. iii. 1039; *hap other grace*, a mere chance or a special favor, M. P. iii. 810; Happes, *pl.* occurrences, M. P. iii. 1279.
Happeth, *pr. s.* chances, F 592; Happeth me, *impers. pr. s.* it happens to me, M. P. v. 101; Happede, *pt. s.* happened, C 608.
Hard, *adj.*; *of hard*. with difficulty, T. ii. 1236; Harde, *adj. def.* hard, cruel, F 499.
Hardement, *s.* hardihood, R. 3392.
Hardily, *adv.* surely, certainly, H. F. 389; boldly, without doubting, without question, E 25; Hardely, unhesitatingly, M. P. vi. 118; certainly, M. P. iii. 1043.
Hardinesse, *s.* boldness, B 3210.
Harding, *s.* hardening, tempering, F 243.
Hardy, *adj.* bold; sturdy, F 19.
Haried, *pp.* taken as a prisoner, A 2726.
Harlot, *s.* rascal, A 647; D 1754.
Harlotryes, *s. pl.* ribaldries, A 361.
Harme, *s.* harm, injury, suffering (*dat.*), F 632.
Harneised, *pp.* equipped, A 124.
Harneys, *s.* armor, gear, furniture, harness, A 1006, 2896.
Harre, *s.* hinge, A 550.
Harrow, *interj.* alas! C 288.
Harwed, *pp.* harrowed, devastated, A 3512; D 2107.
Hasard, *s.* the game of hazard, C 592.
Hasardour, *s.* gamester, G 596.
Hasardrye, *s.* gaming, playing at hazard, C 590.
Hasel-wodes, *s. pl.* hazel-woods, T. iii. 890.
Haste her, *ger.* hasten, M. P. iv. 56.
Hasteth, *imp. pl. refl.* hasten, make haste, I 72.
Hastif, *adj.* hasty, E 349.
Hastilich, *adv.* quickly, E 911.
Hastow, *for* Hast thou, L. 510.
Hatte, *v.* be called, T. iii. 797.
Hatter, *adv.* more hotly, R. 2475.
Hauberk, *s.* coat of mail, M. P. iv. 97; B 2053. See **Habergeoun**.
Hauking, *s.* hawking; *an hauking*, a-hawking, B 1927.
Haunt, *s.* practice, A 447; abode, B 2001.
Haunteth, *pr. s.* practises, C 547; Haunteden, *pt. pl.* practised, C 464; Haunten, *pr. pl.* I 780.
Hautein, *adj.* highflying, L. 1120.
Hauteyn, *adj.* proud, stately, M. P. v. 268; loud, C 330; Hauteyne, *adj.* haughty, high-flying, R. 3739.
Have, *v.* have, B 114; *imp. s.* hold, consider, F 7; receive, E 567; Haveth, *imp. pl.* hold, F 700; *have doon*, make an end, M. P. v. 492.
Havoir, *v.* have, R. 4720.
Hawe, *s.* haw, yard, enclosure, C 855.
Hawe. *s.* haw; *with hawe bake*, with baked haws, with coarse fare, B 95; Hawes, *pl.* hips and haws, M. P. ix. 7.
Hay, *s.* hedge, R. 2987; Hayes, *pl.* T. iii. 351.
He, *usèd for* it, G 867, 868.
He — he, this one — that one, M. P. v. 186.
Hed, *pp.* hidden, L. 208.

Hede, *v.* put a head on, T. ii, 1042.
Hede, *s.* heed, care, B 3377.
Heed, *s.* head, M. P. ii. 24; source, M. P. xvi. 43; Hede, head, M. P. iv. 290; Hedes, *pl.* F 203; Hevedes, B 2032; *maugree thyn heed*, in spite of thy head, in spite of all thou canst do, B 104. See Heved.
Heeld, 1 *pt. s.* held, considered, E 818; *pt. s.* held, esteemed, C 695; possessed, B 3518; Helde, *pl.* held, B 3506.
Heep, *s.* heap, assembly, host, A 575.
Heer, *s.* hair, M. P. iii. 456; Heres, *pl.* L. 1829.
Heer, *adv.* here, M. P. v. 57; B 1177.
Heer-biforn, *adv.* herebefore, before now, M. P. i. 34.
Heer-mele, *s.* hair's-breadth, As. ii. 38, 17.
Heigh, *adj.* high, lofty, B 3192.
Heighly, *adv.* highly, ungently, T. ii, 1733.
Hele, *s.* health, healing, recovery, well-being, M. P. i. 80; health, L. 1159; prosperity, L. 296.
Hele, *v.* to heal, M. P. iii. 571; F 240.
Helelees, *adj.* without health, T. v. 1593.
Helen, *v.* heal, M. P. xi. 4.
Helle, *s. gen.* of hell, M. P. iii. 171; *dat.* hell, B 3292.
Helmed, *pp.* provided with a helmet, B 3560.
Helpe, *pr. s. subj.* may help, M. P. iii. 550; iv. 141.
Helpe, *s.* help, L. 1616.
Helply, *adj.* helpful, T. v. 128.
Hem, *pron.* them, M. P. iii. 1170.
Hem-self, *pron. pl.* themselves, M. P. v. 234.
Heng, *pt. s.* hung, M. P. iii. 122; Henge, *pt. pl.* M. P. iii. 174.
Henne, *adv.* hence, C 687.
Hennesforth, *adv.* henceforth, H. F. 782.
Hente, *pt. s.* caught, took, M. P. iv. 97; *gov.* to seize; *dide her for to hente*, caused her to be seized, L. 2715; seized, took forcibly, E 534; took in hunting, B 3449; caught away, B 1144; raised, lifted, G 205; *pr. s. subj.* may seize, G 7; Hent, *pp.* caught, L. 2322.
Henteres, *s. pl.* seizers, Bo. I, p. iii. 89.
Hepe, *s.* hip, B 1937.
Hepe, *s.* heap, number, M. P. iii. 295.
Her, *pron. poss.* their, B 138, 140.
Heraud, *s.* herald, A 2533.
Heraude, *gov.* to herald, proclaim as a herald does, H. F. 1576.
Her-before, *adv.* previously, M. P. iii. 1302; a while ago, M. P. iii. 1136; Her-beforn, M. P. iii. 1304.
Herber, *s.* arbor, L. 203.
Herbergage, *s.* lodging, abode, B 147.
Herbergeours, *s. pl.* receivers of guests, R. 5000; harbingers, providers of lodging, B 997.
Herberwe, lodging, inn, harbor, A 403, 765.
Herberweden, *pt. pl.* lodged, Bo. II. p. vi. 82.
Her-biforn, *adv.* before this time, L. 73; herebefore, B 613.
Her bothe, *gen. pl.* of both of them, M. P. iv. 52.
Her-by, *adv.* hence, H. F. 263.
Herd, *pp.* haired, A 2518.
Herde, *s.* herdsman, R. 6453; T. iii. 1235.
Herde-gromes, *s. pl.* servants who look after the herds, herdsmen, H. F. 1225.
Herdes, *s.* refuse of flax, R. 1233.
Herdesse, *s. fem.* herdswoman, T. i. 653.
Here, *pron.* her, M. P. vii. 120; B 460.
Here, *v.* hear, M. P. i. 31; Heren, 2 *pr. pl.* hear, L. 1724; Herd, *pp.* heard, B 613; Herestow, *for* Herest thow, hearest thou, H. F. 1031.
Here, *adv.* here, in this place, on this spot, M. P. iii. 93. See Heer.
Here and howne, one and all (?), T. iv. 210.
Heres, *s. pl.* hairs, hair, M. P. iii. 394. See Heer.
Herieth, *pr. s.* praiseth, B 1155; praises, B 1808; Heriest, 2 *pr. s.* praisest, worshippest, B 3419; Herie, *pr. pl.* E 616; Herien, G 47; Heried, *pp.* H. F. 1405; B 872.
Herkne, *gov.* to hearken, listen to, B 3159; Herknen, *v.* L. 343; Herkneth, *imp. pl.* hearken ye, C 454; Herkeneth, *imp. pl.* to hearken, listen to, B 1164; Herkned, *pt. s.* B 1711; Herkning, *pres. part.* listening to, F 78; Herkned after, *pp.* listened for, expected, F 403; Herkene, *v.* hearken, M. P. iii. 752.
Hernes, *s. pl.* corners, G 658.
Heroner, *s.* heron-killer, T. iv. 413.
Heronere, *adj.* used for flying at herons, L. 1120.
Heronsewes, *s. pl.* hernshaws, young herons, F 68.
Heroune, *s.* heron, M. P. v. 346.
Herse, *s.* hearse, M. P. ii. 15, 36.
Herselven, *acc.* herself, M. P. iv. 118.
Hert, *s.* hart, M. P. iii. 351; v. 195.
Herte, *s.* heart, M. P. i. 12; courage, M. P. iii. 1222; *myn hertes*, of my heart, M. P. iv. 57; Hertes, *pl.* L. 1841.
Herte, *pt. s.* hurt, M. P. iii. 883.
Herte-blood, heart's blood, C 902.
Hertelees, without heart, cowardly, B 4098.
Hertely, *adv.* heartily, earnestly, M. P. iii. 1226; truly, M. P. iii. 85; heartily, thoroughly, L. 33.
Herte-rote, *s.* root of the heart, depth of the heart, L. 1993.
Hertes, *s. gen.* hart's, B 3447; *pl.* harts, L. 1212.
Herte-spoon, *s.* 'the concave part of the breast, where the ribs unite with the *cartilago ensiformis*,' A 2606.
Herth, *pr. s.* heareth, L. (A) 327.

Hertly, *adj.* heartfelt, honest, L. 2124; hearty, lit. heart-like, E 502; F 5.
Her-to, *adv.* for this purpose, B 243.
Heryinge, *p. pres.* praising, B 1649.
Heste, *s.* behest, command, B 382, 3754.
Hete, *s.* heat, M. P. iv. 88; G 1408; heat, *but put for* surge, Bo. I. m. vii. 5; passion, M. P. iv. 127.
Hete, *v.* promise, vow, M. P. iii. 1226.
Heterly, *adv.* fiercely, L. 638.
Hethen, *adj.* heathen, B 904.
Hethenesse, *s.* heathen lands, B 1112.
Hething, *s.* mockery, A 4110.
Hette, *pt. s.* heated, inflamed, M. P. v. 145.
Hette, *pt. s.* promised, M. P. iv. 185.
Heve, *pr. s.* lifts up, Bo. V. m. v. 20; Heef, *pt. s.* lifted, Bo. I. p. i. 20.
Heved, *s.* head, H. F. 550. See **Heed**.
Heven, *s.* heaven, the celestial sphere, B 3300; a supreme delight, F 558; Hevene, *gen.* heaven's, of heaven, M. P. i. 24.
Hevenish, *adj.* of the heavens, of the spheres, M. P. iv. 30; heavenly, H. F. 1395.
Hevieth, *pr. pl.* weigh down, Bo. V. m. v. 19.
Hevinesse, *s.* sadness, M. P. iii. 602.
Hevy, *adj.* sad, M. P. iv. 12.
Hew, *s.* complexion, L. 1748.
Hewe, *s.* hue, color, complexion, M. P. iii. 497; hue, color, L. 55; pretence, C 421; hue, appearance, mien, E 377.
Hewe, *s.* domestic servant, E 1785.
Hewed, *pp.* colored, of hue, R. 3014.
Hey! *interj.* hey! L. 1213.
Hey, *s.* hay, H 14.
Heyne, *s.* a worthless person, G 1319.
Heyre, *s.* heir, M. P. iii. 168.
Heyre, *adj.* hair, made of hair, C 736.
Heysugge, *s.* hedge-sparrow, M. P. v. 612.
Hider, *adv.* hither, M. P. iv. 165.
Hiderward, *adv.* hither. in this direction, B 3159.
Hidous, *adj.* dreadful, M. P. i. 132.
Hielde, *pr. s. subj.* pour out, shed, Bo. II. m. ii. 2.
Hierdes, *s. pl.* herdsman, T. iii. 619.
Hight, *pr. s.* is called, is named, M. P. ii. 70; *with passive sense*, L. 417; Highte, *pt. s.* was called, M. P. iii. 63; Highten, *pr. pl.* are called, L. 423; Highte, 2 *pt. pl.* promised, E 496.
Highte, *s.* height, B 12.
Highteth, *pr. s.* adorns, gladdens, Bo. I. m. ii. 28.
Hild, *pt. s.* bent, inclined, M. P. iii. 393.
Him-selven, *acc.* himself, M. P. iv. 98.
Hindreste, hindmost, A 622.
Hipes, *pl.* hips, A 472.
Hir, *pron. poss.* their, L. 753; B 112; her, B 65, 164.
Hir, *pron. pers.* her, B 162.
Hirës, hers, M. P. v. 482, 588.
His, its, M. P. i. 178; E 263; F 405.
Hit, *pron.* it, M. P. ii. 117; *hit am I*, it is I, L. 314.
Hit, *pr. s.* hides, F 512.
Ho, *interj.* halt! B 3957.
Hoke, *s.* hook, M. P. iv. 243.
Hoker, *s.* mockery, A 3965.
Hokerly, *adv.* scornfully, I 584.
Hold, *s.* fort, castle, B 507; hold, grasp, F 167.
Holde, *v.* keep to; *do than holde herto*, keep t it then, M. P. iii. 754; hold, keep, B 41; keep to, F 658 (see **Procès**); *pp.* held, e teemed, M. P. xv. 10; forced, M. P. iii. 1078 *bet for the have holde*, better for thee to hav held, M. P. v. 572; indebted, L. 763; boun L. 1447; considered to be, F 70; Holden, *pp* considered, E 205; held, esteemed, L. 1700 Holden, *v.* think, consider, L. 857; Holdest, *pr. s.* accountest, L. 326; Holde, 1 *pr. s.* consider, deem, G 739.
Hole, *adj. pl.* whole, hale; *hole and sound* safe and sound, B 1150.
Holm, *s.* holm, evergreen oak, M. P. v. 178.
Holour, *s.* lecher, D 254.
Holpen, *pp.* helped, L. 1984; helped, aided, 666; Holpe, L. 461. *Pp. of* Helpen.
Holsom, *adj.* wholesome, healing, M. P. v. 206
Holt, *s.* wood, grove, A 6.
Holwe, *adj.* hollow, G 1265.
Hom, *adv.* home, homewards, F 635.
Homager, *s.* one who does homage, vassal, P 3288.
Homicyde, *s.* homicide, assassin, B 1757.
Homicyde, *s.* manslaughter, murder, C 644.
Hond, *s.* hand, B 3506; *to holde in honde*, delud with false hopes, M. P. iii. 1019; oath (li hand), M. P. iii. 936; *on honde*, in hand, 348.
Honest, *adj.* honorable, worthy, B 1751; hon orable, seemly, decent, C 328.
Honestee, *s.* honor, dignity, B 3157.
Honestetee, *s.* honorableness, honor, E 422.
Honestly, *adv.* honorably, G 549.
Honge, *v.* to hang, C 790; Hongen, *v.* hang, b hung, M. P. v. 458. See **Heng** and **Doon**.
Hony, *s.* honey, B 3537; F 614.
Hoodles, *adj.* without a hood, M. P. iii. 1028.
Hook, *s.* sickle, Bo. III. m. i. 4.
Hool, *adj.* whole, restored to health, L 2468 whole, all, entire, M. P. iii. 554; well, F 161 whole, perfect, G 111, 117.
Hool, *adj.* wholly, M. P. iii. 991.
Hoolly, *adv.* wholly. M. P. iii. 15.
Hoolnesse, *s.* integrity, Bo. IV. p. vi. 220.
Hoom, *adv.* home, L. 1619; homewards, B 3548
Hoomlinesse, *s.* homeliness, domesticity, E 42

Hoor, *adj.* hoary, gray, C 743.
Hoors, *adj.* hoarse, T. iv. 1147.
Hoot, *adj. as s.* hot, M. P. v. 380. See **Hote**.
Hope, *s.* hope, expectation, G 870.
Hoppesteres, *s. pl.* dancers, A 2017.
Hord, *s.* hoarding, M. P. xiii. 3; hoard, treasure, C 775.
Hore, *adj.* hoary, gray-headed, M. P. xvi. 31.
Horn, *s.* horn (musical instrument), H 90.
Horowe, *adj. pl.* foul, scandalous, M. P. iv. 206.
Hors, *s.* a horse, B 15.
Hors, *adj.* hoarse, M. P. iii. 347.
Horsly, *adj.* horse-like, like all that a horse should be, F 194.
Hose, *s.* hose, old stocking, G 726; Hosen, *pl.* B 1923.
Hoste, *s.* host, B 1, 39; E 1.
Hostel, *s.* hostelry, H. F. 1022.
Hostelrye, *s.* hostelry, G 589.
Hostiler, *s.* innkeeper, A 241.
Hote, *adj. def.* voracious (lit. hot), M. P. v. 362; *adj.* hot, an epithet of Aries, as supposed to induce anger and heat of blood, F 51; *pl.* hot, M. P. v. 246. See **Hoot**.
Hote, *v.* be called, R. 38; 1 *pr. s.* command, H. F. 1719.
Hottes, *pl.* baskets carried on the back, H. F. 1940.
Houndes, *s. pl.* dogs, E 1095.
Houndfish, *s.* shark, E 1825.
Houped, *pt. pl.* whooped, B 4590.
Hous, *s.* house, home; *to hous*, to a reception by, L. 1546; Houses, *pl.* astrological 'mansions' of the planets, L. 2593.
Housbond, *s.* husband, B 863.
Housbondrye, *s.* economy, A 4077.
Housel, *s.* the Eucharist, R. 6386.
Housled, *pp.* having received the Eucharist, I 1027.
Hoved, *pt. s.* waited, T. v. 33; Hoven, *pl. pr.* wait in readiness, hover, L. 1196.
How, *adv.* however, R. 6489.
Howve, *s.* cap, 'make him an *howve* above a calle,' T. iii. 775; 'glase his *howve*,' T. v. 469. See **Calle**.
Hulstred, *pp.* concealed, R. 6146.
Humanitee, *s.* kindness, E 92.
Humblesse, *s.* humility, meekness, M. P. i. 108.
Humbling, *s.* low growl (lit. slight humming), H. F. 1039.
Hunte, *s.* hunter, M. P. iii. 345.
Hunteresse, *s. fem.* huntress, H. F. 229.
Hurlest, 2 *pr. s.* dost hurl, dost whirl, B 297.
Hurtlen, *pr. pl.* dash together, L. 638.
Husht, *pp.* hushed, L. 2682.
Hust, *pp.* hushed, T. iii. 1094.
Hyde, *v.* hide, *i.e.* lie concealed, F 141; **Hyd**, 2 *imp. s.* hide, L. 2655. See **Hed**.
Hye, *ger.* to hasten, H. F. 1658; *hy the*, hasten thyself, be quick, G 1295; Hyed hem, *refl. pt. pl.* hastened, M. P. iii. 363.
Hye, *adj.* high, M. P. i. 37; Hyer, *comp.* H. F. 1117; Hyest, *superl.* M. P. v. 324.
Hye, *adv.* high, L. 1200; loudly, M. P. iii. 183; high, aloft, B 3592.
Hyene, *s.* hyena, M. P. x. 35.
Hyne, *s.* hind, peasant, C 688.
Hyre, *s.* hire, reward, M. P. i. 103.

I (*for I and J*).

Iade, *s.* a jade, *i.e.* a miserable hack, B 4002.
Iagounces, *s. pl.* jacinths, R. 1117.
Ialous, *adj.* jealous, M. P. v. 342. See **Ielous**.
Ialousye, *s.* jealousy, C 366. See **Ielosye**.
Iambeux, *s. pl.* leggings, leg-armor, B 2065.
Iane, *s.* a small coin, properly of Genoa, B 1925; E 999.
Iangle, *pr. pl.* talk, prate, F 220.
Iangler, *s.* prater, babbler, M. P. v. 457; Ianglere, A 560.
Iangles, *pl.* pratings, babblings, H. F. 1960.
Ianglest, 2 *pr. s.* chatterest, B 774.
Iangling, *adj.* jangling, prating, M. P. v. 345.
Iangling, *s.* prating, idle talking, disputing, F 257; Ianglinge, I 649.
Iape, *s.* jest, mock, *or* laughing-stock, H. F. 414; a trick, B 1629.
Iape, *ger.* to jest, L. 1699; H 4; Iapen, *v.* to jest, B 1883.
Iape-worthy, *adj.* ridiculous, Bo. V. p. iii. 163.
Iaunyce, *s.* jaundice, R. 305.
Icching, *s.* itching, R. 2450.
Ich, *pers. pron.* I, B 39.
Idus, *s. pl.* ides, F 47.
Ieet, *s.* jet, B 4051.
Ielosye, *s.* jealousy, M. P. iv. 7. See **Ialousye**.
Ielous, *adj.* jealous, suspicious, M. P. iv. 140. See **Ialous**.
Iet, *s.* fashion, mode, A 682.
Ieupardies, *s. pl.* problems (at chess), M. P. iii. 666. Lit. 'jeopardies.'
Iewerye, *s.* Jewry, Jews' quarter, B 1679.
Ignotum, *s.* an unknown thing, G 1457.
I-halowed, *pp.* view-hallooed (of the hart), M. P. iii. 379.
Ik, *pron.* I, A 3867.
Il-hayl, ill-luck to you, A 4089.
Ilke, *adj.* same, M. P. iv. 66; v. 433.
Imped, *pp.* grafted, R. 5137.
Imperie, *s.* government, rank, Bo. II. p. vi. 14.
Impertinent, *adj.* not pertinent, irrelevant, E 54.
Impes, *s. pl.* grafts, shoots, saplings, R. 6293.
Impetren, *pr. pl.* impetrate, ask for, Bo. V. p. iii. 248.

Importable, *adj.* intolerable, insufferable, E. 1144.
Impresse, *pr. pl.* force themselves (upon), make an impression (upon), G 1071.
Impressioun, *s.* impression, remembrance, F 371.
In, *prep.* into, M. P. xx. 6; B 119.
In, *s.* inn, lodging, B 1097.
Inde, *s.* indigo, R. 67.
Indifferently, *adv.* impartially, Bo. V. p. iii. 157.
Induracioun, *s.* hardening, G 855.
Infect, *pp.* invalidated, A 320.
In-fere, *adv.* together, M. P, iv. 290.
Infortunat, *adj.* unfortunate, inauspicious, B 302.
Infortune, *s.* misfortune, B 3591.
Ingot, *s.* an ingot, a mould for pouring metal into, G 1206.
Inhelde, *pr. pl.* infuse, T. iii. 44.
Iniure, *s.* injury, T. iii. 1018.
In-knette, *pt. s.* confined, T. iii. 1088.
Inly, *adv.* wholly, exquisitely, M. P. iii. 276; inwardly, greatly, H. F. 31.
In-mid, *prep.* into, amid, H. F. 923.
Inne, *adv.* in, B 3193; within, G 880.
Inne, *prep.* in, F. 578.
Inned, *pp.* housed, A 2192.
Inparfit, *adj.* imperfect, Bo. III. p. x. 20.
Inplitable, *adj.* intricate, impracticable, Bo. I. p. iv. 101.
Inset, *pp.* implanted, Bo. II. p. iii. 19.
In thringe, *v.* press in, T. iv. 66.
Intresse, *s.* interest, M. P. x. 71.
In-with, *prep.* within, B 1794; E 870.
Io, *v.* come about, T. iii. 33.
Iogelours, *s. pl.* jugglers, H. F. 1259.
Ioie, *s.* joy, B 3964. See **Ioye**.
Iolif, *adj.* joyful, A 3355.
Iolitee, joviality, M. P. ii. 39; C 780; F 278; amusement, B 2033; enjoyment, F 344; Iolytee, jollity, merriment, happiness, H. F. 682; Iolyte, M. P. v. 226.
Ioly, *adj.* pleasant, delightful, L. 176.
Iolynesse, *s.* festivity, F 289.
Iompre, *imp. s.* jumble, T. ii. 1037.
Iordanes, *s. pl* chamber-pots, C 305.
Iouken, *v.* repose, T. v. 409.
Iournee, *s.* day's work, R. 579.
Iowes, *s. pl.* cheeks, *hence* heads, H. F. 1786; jaws, Bo. I. p. iv. 121.
Ioye, *s.* joy. See **Ioie**.
Ioyne, *v.* enjoin, R. 2355.
Ioyned, *pt. s.* joined, let (his ears) touch one another, M. P. iii. 393.
Ioynture, *s.* union, Bo. II. p. v. 56.
Irous, *adj.* passionate, D 2086.
Isse, *v.* issue, R. 1992; **Issest**, 2 *pr. s.* issuest, Bo. III. p. xii. 186.
Iubbe, *s.* jug, A 3698.
Iuge, *s.* judge, M. P. i. 234.
Iugement, *s.* judgment, decision, L. 406; opinion, F 8.
Iupartye, *s.* jeopardy, R. 2666.
Iusten, *v.* joust, L. 1274; H 42.
Iusting, *s.* jousting, L. 1115.
Iustise, *s.* punishment, R, 2077.
Iustyse, *s.* justice, judge, M. P. i. 37; judgment, condemnation, M. P. i. 142.
Iuwel, *s.* jewel, jewelled ornament, L. 1117.
Iuyse, *s.* justice, judgment, B 795.
I-wis, *adv.* certainly, truly, M. P. vi. 48.

K.

Kalender, *s.* calendar; *and so* a complete record of examples, L. 542; Kalenderes, *s. pl.* calendars, M. P. i. 73.
Kalendes, *s. pl.* calends, the first or beginning, T. v. 1634.
Karf, *pt. s.* cut, M. P. ix. 21. See **Kerve**.
Kecche, *v.* catch, T. iii. 1375.
Kechil, *s.* cake, D 1747.
Keep, *s.* heed, care, M. P. vii. 135; L. 1733.
Kek! *interj.* (represents the cackle of a goose), M. P. v. 499.
Kembe, *ger.* to comb, H. F. 136; Kembde, *pt. s.* combed, F 560; Kembd, *pp.* E 379.
Kempe, *adj.* shaggy, A 2134.
Ken, *s.* kin, kindred, men, M. P. iii. 438.
Kene, *adj.* keen, eager, M. P. xxi. 6; bold, B 3439; F 57.
Kene, *adv.* keenly, M. P. xi. 3; vi. 63.
Kenne, *v.* perceive, discern, H. F. 498.
Kepe, *s.* heed, care, note, M. P. iii. 6, 128; heed, E 1058; *taken kepe*, take heed, F 348. See **Kep**.
Kepe, *v.* keep, preserve, L. 384; 1 *pr. s.* care, L. 1032; *I kepe han*, I care to have, G 1368; Kepte, *pt. s.* kept, E 223; *pt. pl.* regarded, tended, B 269; Kepeth, *imp. pl.* keep ye, B 764; *pr. s.* keeps, E 1133; observes, F 516; Keping, *pres. part.* keeping, tending, F 652; Kepen, 1 *pr. pl.* care, H. F. 1695; Kept, *pp.* E 1068.
Kerchief, *s.* kerchief, finely woven loose covering to throw over one, M. P. v. 272; Kerchef, *s.* kerchief, L. 2202; B 837.
Kernels, *s. pl.* R. 4195.
Kerve, *ger.* to cut, M. P, v. 217; *v.* to carve, cut, F 158; Karf, *pt. s.* carved, M. P. ix. 21; Kerveth, *pr. s.* carves, cuts, L. 2334. See **Corve**.
Kerver, *s.* carver, A 1899.
Kervings, *s. pl.* carvings, H. F, 1302.

Kesse, *v.* to kiss, E 1057; Keste, *pt. s.* kissed, F 350; Kiste, E 679.

Kevere, *v.* recover, T. i. 917; Kevered, *pp.* covered, H. F. 275, 352.

Keye, *s.* key, M. P. vii. 323; key, *in place of* rudder, Bo. III. p. xii. 88.

Kid, *pp.* known, M. P. ix. 46; made known, L. 1028; Kidde, *pt. s.* showed, T. i. 208. See Kythe.

Kimelin, *s.* brewing-tub, A 3548.

Kin, *s.* kindred, race, G 849; *som kin*, of some kind, B 1137.

Kinnes, *s. gen.* kind's; *alles kinnes*, of every kind, H. F. 1530.

Kinrede, *s.* birth, family, L. 2094.

Kirtels, *pl.* kirties, M. P. v. 235.

Kiste, *pt. s.* kissed, L. 2208; *in phr.* been they kist = they have kissed each other, B 1074.

Kitte, *pt. s.* cut, B 600, 1761.

Knakkes, *s. pl.* knick-knacks, contemptible trifles, M. P. iii. 1033.

Knarre, *s.* a knotted. thick-set fellow, A 549.

Knarry, *adj.* gnarled, A 1977.

Knave, *s.* boy, servant-lad, B 474; boy, male, E 444; *knave child*, man-child, boy, E 612; Knaves, *pl.* boys, lads, B 3087; Knave, *as adj.* male, B 722.

Knette, *v.* knit, join, M. P. iv. 183; Knet, *pp.* knitted, fixed, M. P. v. 628; Knit, joined in love, M. P. iv. 50; *pp.* knit, B 3224. See Knitte.

Knettinge, *s.* chain, Bo. V. p. i. 43.

Knewe, *pt. s. subj.* knew; *but she the bet him knewe*, unless she could know him better, L. 801; Knowe, *pp.* known, F 215; Knowen, *a pr. pl.* ye know, B 128; Knewe, *pt. s. subj.* might know, M. P. iii. 1133; were to know it, M. P. iv. 204; *pl.* may have known, M. P. ii. 31; Knowestow, knowest thou, B 367.

Knitte, *ger.* to knit, I 47; Knittest thee, *a pr. s. refl.* knittest thyself, joinest thyself, art in conjunction, B 307. See Knette.

Knittinges, *pl.* connections, Bo. V. m. iii. 20.

Knokked, *pt. s.* knocked, B 3721; Knokkeden, *pt. pl.* beat, knocked for admission, M. P. iv. 84.

Knopped, *pp.* knobbed, R. 7260.

Knoppes, *s. pl.* buds, R. 1675.

Knotte, *s.* knot, principal point of a story, gist of a tale, F 401, 407.

Knotteles, *adj.* like an unknotted string, T. v. 769.

Knowe, *s.* knee, T. ii. 1202; Knowes, *pl.* B 1719.

Knowing, *s.* knowledge, M. P. iii. 960.

Knowinge, *adj.* conscious, Bo. III. p. xi. 189; Knowinge with me, *i.e.* my witnesses, Bo. I. p. iv. 55.

Knowleching, *s.* knowing, knowledge, G 1432; Knowelechinge, cognition, Bo. V. p. v. 3.

Konning, *s.* cunning, skill, F 251.

Kukkow! *int.* cuckoo! M. P. v. 499.

Kunninge, *s.* skill, M. P. v. 513.

Kyked, *pt. s.* peeped, A 3445.

Kynd, *s.* nature, natural disposition, M. P. vii. 149; Kynde, nature, M. P. iii. 16; the natural world, H. F. 584; Kynde, *dat.* nature, M. P. iv. 282; kind, species, M. P. v. 174; natural disposition. H. F. 43; natural ordinance, M. P. iii. 494; Kyndes, *pl.* sorts, H. F. 204.

Kyndly, *adj.* natural, H. F. 730; Kyndely, M. P. iii. 761; Kyndeliche, H. F. 829.

Kyndly, *adv.* in accordance with what is natural, naturally, M. P. ii. 71; Kyndely, by nature, M. P. iii. 778.

Kyte, *s.* kite (bird), M. P. v. 349; F 624.

Kythe, *v.* make known, declare to be, M. P. vii. 228; make known, show plainly, L. 912; Kythen, *v.* show, M. P. x. 63; Kytheth, *imp. pl.* display, M. P. iv. 298; Kythe, *pr. s. subj.* may show, B 636; Kythed, *pp.* shown, G 1054. See Kid.

L.

Laas, *s.* lace, band, G 574. See Las.

Labbe, *s.* tell-tale, blabber, T. iii. 300.

Labbing, *pres. part.* blabbing, babbling, E 2428.

Label, *s.* a kind of ruler, As. ii. 22, 1.

Labour, *s.* endeavor, B 381.

Lacche, *s.* snare, R. 1624.

Lace, *s.* net. R. 2792; snare, entanglement, M. P. xviii. 50.

Lacerte, *s.* muscle, A 2753.

Lache, *adj.* lazy, dull, Bo. IV. p. iii. 147.

Lachesse, *s.* negligence, I 720.

Ladde, *pt. s.* led, M. P. iii. 365; brought, M. P. vii. 39; carried, L. 114; conducted, B 3747; Lad, *pp.* led, L. 1108; carried, L. 74.

Lady, *s. gen.* of (my) lady, M. P. iii. 949; Ladyes, *pl.* B 254.

Lafte, *pt. s.* left, L. 1332; ceased, B 3496; Laften, *pt. pl.* left, L. 168; Laft, *pp.* L. 1260; Lafte, 1 *pt. s.* I left, C 762.

Lak, *s.* lack, defect, M. P. iii. 958; blame, dispraise, L. (A) 298; want, defect, L. 1534.

Lake, *s.* a kind of fine white linen cloth, B 2048.

Lakke, *s. dat.* lack, want, loss, M. P. v. 87.

Lakked, *pt. s.* wanted, lacked; *him lakked*, there lacked to him, *i.e.* he lacked, F 16; Lakketh, *pr. s.* lacks, G 498; Lakken, *v.* depreciate, T. i. 189.

Lambish, *adj.* gentle as lambs, M. P. ix. 50.

Lambren, *s. pl.* lambs, R. 7013.

Lampe, *s.* lamina, thin plate, G 764.

Langour, *s.* languishment, slow starvation, B 3597.
Lapidaire, a treatise on precious stones, H. F. 1352.
Lappe. *s.* lap, fold of the dress, F 441; skirt or lappet of a garment, G 12; a wrapper, E 585.
Lappeth, *pr. s.* enfolds, embraces, M. P. iv. 76. (For wlappeth.)
Large, *adj.* liberal, free, M. P. iii. 893; *at his large*, free to move, H. F. 745.
Large, *adv.* liberally, M. P. i. 174.
Largesse, *s.* liberality, generosity of heart, M. P. vii. 42; liberal bestower, M. P. i. 13; Larges, largesse, H. F. 1309.
Las, *s.* snare, entanglement (lit. lace), L. 600.
Lasse, *adv.* less, M. P. iii. 927; *adj.* less, C 602; *adj. pl.* smaller, of less rank; *lasse and more*, smaller and greater, *i.e.* all, E 67; Las, M. P. iii. 675.
Last, *s. pl.* lasts, *i.e.* burdens, loads, B 1628.
Laste, *v.* endure, M. P. iv. 226; Last, *pr. s.* lasteth, M. P. v. 49; Laste, *pt. s.* lasted (*the swogh me laste*, my swoon lasted), M. P. ii. 16; Laste, *pt. s.* delayed, L. 791.
Laste; *at the laste*, at last, M. P. iii. 364.
Lat, *imp. s.* let, M. P. i. 79; *lat be*, give up, H. F. 992; Lat, 1 *pr. s.* let, L. 1210; *lat goon*, let go, let slip (the dogs), L. 1213; *lat take*, let us take, G 1254.
Late, *adj.* late; *bet than never is late*, G 1410.
Lathe, *s.* barn, H. F. 2140.
Latis, *s.* lattice, T. ii. 615.
Latitude, *s.* latitude (in an astronomical sense), B 13.
Laton, *s.* latten, or latoun, a mixed metal, closely resembling brass, B 2067.
Latoun, *s.* a kind of brass, C 350.
Laude, *s.* praise, H. F. 1575.
Launce, *v.* fling themselves about, rear, H. F. 946.
Launcegay, *s.* a kind of lance, B 1942.
Launde, *s.* a grassy clearing (called dale in l. 327), M. P. v. 302.
Laure, *s.* laurel, H. F. 1107.
Laureat, *adj.* laureate, crowned with laurel, B 3886; E 31.
Laurer, *s.* laurel, M. P. v. 182; vii. 24.
Laurer-crouned, *pp.* crowned with laurel, M. P. vii. 43.
Laus, *adj.* loose, Bo. IV. p. vi. 160.
Laven, *ger.* to exhaust, Bo. IV. p. vi. 15; Laved, *pp.* drawn up, Bo. III. m. xii. 28.
Lavender, *s.* laundress, L. 358.
Lawe, *adj.* low, R. 5046.
Lay, *s.* song, lay, M. P. iii. 471; B 1959.
Lay, *s.* law, L. 336; religious belief, faith, creed, B 572; F 18.
Lazar, *s.* leper, A 242.
Leche, *s.* physician, R. 2944; leech, healer, M. P. i. 134.
Lecher, *s.* healer, Bo. IV. p. vi. 260.
Lecherous folk, carnal sinners, answering to Dante's 'i peccator carnali,' M. P. v. 79.
Lede, *v.* lead, take, L. 202; to govern, B 434; *pr. s. subj.* may bring, B 357. See **Ladde**.
Leden, *adj.* leaden, G 728.
Ledene, *s.* (*dat.*) language, talk, F 435.
Leed, *s.* lead (metal), H. F. 739; Lede, *dat.* H. F. 1431; Leed, *s.* lead, G 406; leaden vessel, A 202.
Leef, *adj.* dear, M. P. iii. 8; pleasant; *that leef me were*, which I should like, H. F. 1999; *as s.* what is pleasant; *for leef ne looth*, for weal nor for woe, L. 1639; *adj. as s.* dear, love, lover, L. 880, 1260, 1654; Leef, *adj.* dear, precious, G 1467; *yow so leef*, so dear to you, so desired by you, C 760. See **Leve**.
Leef, *adv.* dear; Lever, *comp.* dearer, liefer, F 572.
Leef, *imp.* leave, T. iv. 896.
Leef, *s.* a leaf, E 1211.
Leefful, *adj.* lawful, I 41.
Leefsel, *s.* bower, I 411.
Leek, *s.* leek, H. F. 1708; leek, *i.e.* thing of small value, G 795.
Leep, *pt. s.* leapt, L. 2709.
Lees, *adj.* false, R. 8.
Lees, *s.* lying, lie, untruth, L. 1022; Lees, *pl* lies, H. F. 1464.
Lees, *s.* leash, snare, M. P. vii. 233; leash, G 19.
Lees, *pt. s.* lost, H. F. 1414. See **Lese**.
Leet, *pt. s.* let, allowed, H. F. 243; *leet the cors embaume*, (she) had the body embalmed, L. 676; let, caused (to be), B 959; *imp. s.* let, C 731; *pt. s.* let, E 82; caused, as in *leet don cryen*, caused to be proclaimed, F 45; *leet make*, caused to be made, B 3349; *leet binde*, caused to be bound, B 1810. See **Lat**, **Lete**.
Lefe, *adj. fem. voc.* dear, H. F. 1827.
Lefte, *pt. s.* delayed, R. 4093; 1 *pt. s.* I left off, F 670.
Leggen, *v.* relieve, R. 5016.
Leke, *s.* leek, R. 4830.
Lemes, *s. pl.* gleams, flashes, R. 5346.
Lemman, *s.* lover; lit. dear man, B 917; sweetheart, B 3253.
Lendes, *s. pl.* loins, A 3237.
Lene, *adj.* lean, M. P. xi. 28; B 4003.
Lene, *ger.* to lend, G 1024, 1037.
Lenger, *adv. comp.* longer, M. P. ii. 95; *ever lenger the more*, the longer, the more, E 687; F 404.
Lengest, *adv. sup.* longest, M. P. v. 549.
Lengthe, *s.* length; *upon lengthe*, after a long run, M. P. iii. 352.

Lente, *s.* Lent, E 12.
Leonesse, *s.* lioness, L. 805.
Leos, *s. pl.* people, G 103, 106.
Leoun, *s.* lion, B 475; G 178.
Lepand, *pr. pt.* leaping, R. 1928.
Lepardes, *s. pl.* leopards, B 3451.
Lepe, *pr. pl.* leap, G 915.
Lere, *s.* flesh, skin, B 2047.
Lere, *v.* (1) teach, H. F. 764; (2) learn, H. F. 1997; Lere, *v.* learn, B 1702; *pr. pl.* learn, F 104; *ger.* to learn, B 181; *pr. s. subj.* may learn, G 607; Lered, *pp.* learned, L. 1153.
Lered, *adj.* learned, M. P. v. 46.
Lerne, *ger.* to teach, G 844; Lerned of, taught by, G 748.
Lerned, *pp. as adj.* learned, B 1168.
Lerninge, *s.* instruction, G 184.
Lese, *v.* lose, M. P. v. 402; *lese me*, lose myself, be lost, M. P. v. 147; Leseth, *pr. s.* loses, M. P. iii. 33; Lorn, *pp.* lost, T. i. 373.
Lese, *s.* pasture, H. F. 1768.
Lesing, *s.* lie, H. F. 2089; Lesinge, lying, H. F. 154; Lesinges, *pl.* lies, H. F. 676; lying reports, H. F. 2123.
Lesinge, *s.* losing, loss; *for lesinge*, for fear of losing, B 3750.
Lessoun, *s.* lesson, M. P. iv. 33.
Lest, *s.* pleasure, M. P. iii. 908; inclination, H. F. 287; desire, E 619. See **Lust**.
Lest, *pr. s. impers.*; *thee lest*, it pleases thee, M. P. v. 114; Leste, *pt. s. subj.* might please, H. F. 282; *her leste*, it should please her, M. P. v. 551; Leste, *pr. s. subj. impers.* it may please, L. 1338; *as yow leste*, as it may please you, L. 449.
Leste, *adj. superl. as s.* least, the least one, M. P. iii. 283; *at the leste*, at least, M. P. iv. 19, 24; *at the leste weye*, at any rate; *atte leste*, at the least, at least, B 38.
Let, *pr. s.* prevents, Bo. III. p. x. 181; *pt. s.* caused, permitted, B 373. See **Lat**.
Lete, *v.* leave, quit, M. P. i. 72; omit, depart from, M. P. v. 391; Lete of, *ger.* to leave off, M. P. xviii. 52; Let, *pr. s.* lets go, repels, M. P. v. 151; Leten (goon), *pp.* let (go), H. F. 1934; Let, *pt. s.* caused, L. 2624; *let calle*, caused to be called, L. 1864; Leteth, *imp. pl.* cease from, L. 411; Lete, *v.* let, B 3524; 1 *pr. s.* I leave, B 96; Lete, *v.* forsake, B 325. See **Lat**, **Leet**.
Lette, *ger.* to hinder, H. F. 1954; *v.* cease, M. P. iv. 186; *pt. s.* stopped, waited, H. F. 2070; Lettest, 2 *pr. s.* preventest, hinderest, stoppest, L. 325; Lette, *pt. s.* tarried, L. 2167; Lette, *v.* to hinder, delay; *used intrans.* to cause delay, B 1117; to hinder, B 2116; to oppose, stay, B 3306; *pt. s. intrans.* delayed, E 389.
Lette, *s.* let, impediment, hindrance, delay, E 300; hindrance, delay, T. iii. 235.
Lette-game, *s.* spoil-sport, T. iii. 527.
Letterure, *s.* literature, B 3686; literature, book-lore, G 846.
Lettres, *s. pl.* letters, B 736.
Letuarie, *s.* electuary, C 307; electuary, remedy, T. v. 741.
Leve, *v.* believe, M. P. v. 496; *ger.* to be believed, H. F. 708; Leveth, *imp. pl.* believe, M. P. vi. 88; Levestow, believest thou, G 212.
Leve, *v.* leave, let go, M. P. iii. 1111; go away, M. P. v. 153; 1 *pr. s.* leave, M. P. ii. 50; Leveth, *imp. pl.* leave, M. P. vi. 118; Leve, *v.* to leave, give up, E 250; *ger.* to forsake, G 287.
Leve, *ger.* to allow, permit, L. 2280; *pr. s. subj.* grant, L. 2083; Leve, 3 *imp. s.* (God) grant, B. 1873.
Leve, *s.* leave, M. P. iv. 9; permission, T. iii. 622.
Leve, *adj. voc.* dear, H. F. 816; beloved, G 257; Leve, *pl.* dear, valued, F 341. See **Leef**.
Leveful, *adj.* permissible, praiseworthy, allowable, G 5.
Lever, *adj. comp.* dearer, L. 191; *adv. comp.* rather, M. P. xvii. 13; Lever, *adj. comp.* liefer, dearer, more desirable, B 3628; rather; *me were lever*, it would be dearer to me, I had rather, C 615.
Levesel, *s.* leafy bower, A 4061.
Levest, *sup.* dearest, most desirable, H. F. 87.
Leveth, *pr. s.* remains, M. P. iii. 701.
Lewed, *adj.* ignorant, M. P. v. 46; L. 415.
Lewedly, *adv.* ignorantly, B 47; ignorantly, ill, G 430; H 59.
Lewednesse, *s.* ignorance, ignorant behavior, M. P. x. 68. See **Lewed**.
Ley, *pt. s.* lied, T. ii. 1077.
Leye, *v.* lay, M. P. iv. 205; Leyde, *pt. s.* laid, M. P. iii. 394; Leyd, *pp.* fixed, M. P. iii. 1146; set, M. P. iii. 1036; Leye, *v.* wager, assert, T. iii. 1658; Leyd, *pp.* laid down; *I was leyd*, I had laid myself down, L. 208; Leye, *v.* to lay a wager, bet, G 596; 1 *pr. pl.* we lay out, we expend, G 783; Leyden forth, *pt. pl.* brought forward, B 213.
Leyser, *s.* leisure, M. P. iii. 172.
Leyt, *s.* flame, lightning, I 839.
Lia, *put for* Lat. Lia, *i.e.* Leah in the book of Genesis, G 96.
Libardes, *s. pl.* leopards, R. 894.
Libel, *s.* bill of complaint, D 1595.
Licentiat, one licensed by the Pope to hear confessions, independently of the local ordinaries, A 220.
Liche, *adj.* like, L. 1529; *it liche*, like it, F 62.
Liche-wake, *s.* corpse-watch, A 2958.

Licour, *s.* juice, C 452.

Lief, *adj.* dear, cherished, E 479; *goode lief my wyf*, my dear good wife, B 3084. See **Leef**.

Lige, *adj.* liege: *lige man*, vassal, L. 379.

Ligeaunce, *s.* allegiance, B 895.

Liggen, *v.* to lie, lie down, B 2101.

Light, *adj.* easy, M. P. v. 554.

Light, *pp.* lighted, L. 2506.

Lighte, *v.* descend, H. F. 508; *pr. pl.* alight, L. 1713.

Lighted, *pp.* lighted up, brightened, M. P. i. 74.

Lighter, *adv. comp.* more easily, more readily: *the lighter merciable*, more readily merciful on that account, L. 410.

Lightly, *adv.* readily, M. P. iv. 205.

Ligne aloës, *s.* aloes-wood, T. iv. 1137.

Likerous, *adj.* lecherous, M. P. ix. 57; very vile, Bo. III. p. iv. 34; gluttonous, dainty, greedy, C 540.

Lilting-horne, *s.* horn to be played for a lilt, H. F. 1223.

Limitour, *s.* licensed beggar, A 209.

Linage, *s.* lineage, birth, descent, L. 1830; consanguinity, L. 2602; lineage, kindred, B 999.

Lind, *s.* lime-tree, A 2922.

Linde, *s.* linden-tree, E 1211.

Lipsed, *pt. s.* lisped, A 264.

Lisse, *v.* soothe, M. P. vi. 6; *pr. s. subj.* may alleviate, M. P. iii. 210.

Lisse, *s.* cessation, assuaging, H. F. 220; alleviation, solace, M. P. iii. 1040.

List, *s.* ear, D 634.

List, *pr. s.* it pleases, M. P. i. 172: is pleased, likes to, M. P. xvi. 35; *me list right evel*, I was in no mind to, M. P. iii. 239; *you list*, it pleases you, M. P. x. 77; Listeth, *pr. s.* pleases, is pleased, H. F. 521; Listen, *pr. pl.* list, choose, B 2234; *after thise olde auctours listen to trete*, as these old authors choose to write, L. 575; Liste, *pt. s.* liked, L. 1407; *impers.* it pleased, L. 332; *her liste*, it pleased her, she cared, M. P. iii. 878, 962; *him liste*, he wanted, M. P. iv. 92.

Listes, *pl.* wiles: *in his listes*, by means of his wiles, M. P. i. 85.

Listeth, *imp. pl.* listen ye, B 1902, 2023.

Litarge, *s.* litharge, G 775.

Litargie, *s.* lethargy, Bo. I. p. ii. 24.

Lite, *adj.* little, B 109. See **Lyte**.

Litel of, small in, deficient in, M. P. v. 513.

Litestere, *s.* dyer, M. P. ix. 17.

Lith, *s.* limb, M. P. iii. 953.

Litherly, *adv.* badly, A 3899.

Liveree, *s.* livery, A 363.

Livestow, *for* livest thou, C 719.

Lixt, liest, D 1618.

Lode, *s.* load, A 2918.

Lodemenage, *s.* pilotage, A 403.

Lodesmen, *pl.* pilots, L. 1488.

Lode-sterre, *s.* lodestar, A 2039.

Lofte, *s. dat.* air; *in lofte*, in the air, H. F. 1727; B 277.

Logge, *s.* a lodging, B 4043.

Loigne, *s.* tether, R. 3882.

Lokeden, *pt. pl.* looked, L. 1972; **Loked**, *pt. s.* looked, E 340; Loketh, *imp. s.* look ye, behold, G 1389; search ye, C 578.

Loken, *pp.* locked, enclosed, B 4065.

Loking, *s.* manner of looking, gaze, M. P. iii. 870; examining, M. P. v. 110; aspect (astrological), M. P. iv. 51; glance, look, L. 240.

Lokkes, locks of hair, A 81.

Loller, *s.* a loller, a lollard, B 1173.

Lomb, *s.* lamb, L. 1798.

Lond, *s.* land; country, B 3548; Londe, land, R 5122.

Lone, *s.* loan, D 1861.

Long, *prep.*; the phrase *wherson . . . longe long on wher*, along of what, G 930; *longe on*, along of, because of, G 922.

Longe, *adv.* long, M. P. iv. 172; long, a long while, B 1626, 3300.

Longe, *pl. adj.* long, high, M. P. v. 230.

Longes, *s. pl.* lungs, A 2752.

Longeth, *pr. s.* belongs, M. P. xiv. 5; *pr. pl.* belong, L. 231; Longing, *pres. p.* belonging, L. 1963.

Longing for, *i.e.* belonging to, suitable for, F 30.

Loos, *s.* praise, H. F. 1621; G 1368.

Loos, *adj.* loose, M. P. v. 570.

Looth, *adj.* loath, displeasing: *me were looth*, it would be displeasing to me, B 92.

Loppe, *s.* spider, As. i. 19, 3.

Loppe-webbe, *s.* spider's web, As. i. 21, 3.

Lordeth, *pr. s.* rules over, M. P. iv. 166.

Lordings, *s. pl.* sirs, B 573; C 389; I 15.

Lore, *s.* teaching, L. 2450; study, G 849; lore, learning, experience, knowledge, B 4, 1168; F 87, 788.

Lore, *pp.* lost, M. P. ii. 77; Lorn, M. P. ii. 27; Loren, *pp.* lost, L. 1048; Losten, *pt. pl.* lost, G 398. See **Lese**.

Lorel, *s.* rascal, D 273.

Los, *s.* loss, B 27, 28; F 450.

Los, *s.* praise, renown, fame, L. 1404, 1513; Losses, *pl.* praises; *til her losses*, for their praises, in praise of them, H. F. 1688. See **Loos**.

Losengeour, *s.* flatterer, L. 352.

Losengerie, *s.* flattery, false praise, I 613.

Losenges, *pl.* lozenges, H. F. 1327.

Lost, *s.* loss, Bo. II. p. iv. 205.

Loteby, *s.* paramour, R. 6340.

Loth, *adj.* loath, M. P. iii. 8; loathsome, M. P. xxii. 71; Lothe, *pl.* M. P. iii. 581; Loth, *adj. as s.* what is hateful, woe, L. 1639.

Lother, *adj. comp.* more hateful, L. 191.

Lotinge, *pres. part.* lurking, G 186.

Loude, *adv.* loudly, M. P. iii. 344: *def. adj.* loud, F 268.

Lough, *pt. s.* laughed, B 3740.

Louke, *s.* fellow-rascal, A 4415.

Loured, *pp.* frowned, H. F. 409.

Loure, *adj. inorg.* true, H. F. 218. See **Loue**.

Loute, *v.* bow, bend, H. F. 1704; **bow**, T. iii. 683; Louted, *pt. s.* bow, R. 1554; Loute, *v.* to bow down, B 3352.

Love-dayes, *pl.* appointed days of reconciliation, H. F. 695.

Loveden, *pt. pl.* loved, L. 1812; Loven, *ger.* to love, M. P. iv. 48; Lovede, *pt. s.* loved, E 413; Loveth, *imp. pl.* love ye, E 370.

Love-drury, *s.* affection, B 2085.

Lovere, *s.* a lover, F 546.

Loves, *s. pl.* loaves, B 503.

Lovyere, *s.* lover, A 80.

Lowe, *adv.* in lowly fashion, L. 2046; in a low voice, F 216.

Luce, *s.* pike, A 350.

Lucre, *s.* lucre, gain: *lucre of vilanye*, villanous lucre, vile gain, B 1681; profit, G 1402.

Lufsom, *adj.* lovable, T. v. 465.

Lulleth, *pr. s.* lulls, soothes, B 839.

Luna, *s.* the moon, G 826; a name for silver, G 1442.

Lunarie, *s.* lunary, moon-wort, G 800.

Lure, *s.* a hawk's lure, the bait by which a hawk was tempted to return to the fowler's hand, H 72; Lures, *pl.* lures, wiles, L. 1371.

Lust, *s.* pleasure, joy, delight, M. P. i. 206; desire, M. P. iii. 273; will, M. P. iv. 63; Luste, *dat.* pleasure, M. P. v. 15.

Lusteth, *pr. s. impers.* pleases, L. 996; Lust, *pr. s. impers.* it pleases, E 322; Luste, *pt. s. impers.* it pleased, M. P. iii. 1019; *pers.* was pleased, desired, G 1344. See **List**.

Lustihede, *s.* cheerfulness, M. P. iii. 27; vigor, L. 1530.

Lustier, *adj. comp.* more joyous, G 1345.

Lustily, *adv.* merrily, gayly, R. 1319.

Lustinesse, *s.* pleasure, A 1939.

Lusty, *adj.* cheerful, glad, pleasant, M. P. iv. 151; strong, hearty, L. 1193; jocund, F 272; lusty, H 41.

Luxures, *s. pl.* lusts, Bo. III. p. vii. 13.

Lyard, *adj.* gray, D 1563.

Lycorys, *s.* licorice, B 1951, 2045.

Lye, 2 *pr. pl.* lie, recline, M. P. iv. 5.

Lyen, *v.* tell lies, M. P. iii. 631.

Lyes, *pl.* lees, dregs, H. F. 2130.

Lyf, *s.* life, M. P. i. 72; *his lyf*, during his life, B 3369.

Lyflode, *s.* livelihood, R. 5602.

Lyfly, *adv.* in a lifelike way, A 2087.

Lyk, *adj.* like, M. P. iv. 237. See **Liche**.

Lyke, *ger.* to please, H. F. 860; Lyked, *pt. s. impers.* it liked, pleased, M. P. vii. 109; Lyketh yow, *pr. s. impers.* it pleases you, M. P. v. 401; Lyke, *v.* please, T. i. 431; *pr. s. impers.* please, L. 319; *though thee lyke nat*, though it may not please you, L. 490; Lyken, *v.* to please, B 2128; Lyketh, *pr. s.* it pleases, E 311; *us lyketh yow*, it pleases us with respect to you, E 106; *how lyketh thee my wyf*, how does it please you with respect to my wife, E 1031; Lykned, *pp.* likened, compared, B 91.

Lyking, *s.* pleasure, liking, delight, B 3499.

Lyklihede, *s.* likelihood, probability, B 1786.

Lyklinesse, *s.* probability, M. P. xxii. 15.

Lykne, *v. pr. s.* liken, compare, M. P. iii. 636.

Lym, *s.* quicklime, L. 649; lime, G 910.

Lymaille, *s.* filings of any metal, G 1162; Lymail, G 1164.

Lymere, hound held in leash, M. P. iii. 365.

Lymrod, *s.* lime-rod, lime-twig, B 3574.

Lytargye, *s.* lethargy, T. i. 730.

Lyte, *adj.* little, M. P. v. 64; *as s.* a little, M. P. iii. 249.

Lyte, *adv.* little, M. P. iii. 884; in a small degree, G 632, 699. See **Lite**.

Lyth, *pr. s.* lieth, lies, M. P. iii. 181; *lyeth ther-to*, belongs here, is needed, M. P. iii. 527.

Lythe, *adj.* smooth, easy, R. 3762; easy, soft, H. F. 118.

Lyve, *dat.* life, M. P. iii. 1278; *his lyve*, during his life, M. P. iii. 247; *on lyve*, alive, M. P. iii. 151; Lyves day, lifetime, L. 1624; Lyve, *dat. from* Lyf, whence *on lyve*, during life, *i.e.* alive, F 423.

Lyves, *s. gen.* of my life, M. P. iii. 920; *our present worldes lyves space*, the space of our life in the present world, M. P. v. 53; Lyves, *s. pl. gen.* souls', lives', G 56; Lyves, *gen. sing. used as adv.* living, E 903.

Lyves, *adv.* living, alive, H. F. 1063.

Lyvinge, *s.* manner of life, C 847.

M.

Maad, *pp.* made, B 3607. See **Make**.

Maat, *adj.* dejected, Bo. II. p. iv. 48.

Mace, *s.* a mace, club, B 2003.

Mad, *pp.* made, L. 286. See **Make**.

Madde, *v.* go mad, M. P. iv. 253.

Mader, *s.* madder, M. P. ix. 17.

Magistrat, *s.* magistracy, Bo. III. p. iv. 28.

Magyke, *s.* magic, H. F. 1266.

Maidenhede, *s.* maidenhood, virginity, M. P. i. 91.

Maille, *s.* mail, ringed armor, E 1202.
Maister, *s.* master, B 1627, 3128.
Maister-strete, *s.* main street, L. 1965.
Maister-temple, *s.* chief temple, L. 1016.
Maister-toun, *s.* capital, L. 1591.
Maister-tour, *s.* principal tower, F 226.
Maistow, mayst thou, H. F. 699.
Maistres, *s. pl.* masters, B 141.
Maistresse, *s.* mistress, M. P. i. 109.
Maistrye, *s.* specimen of skill, H. F. 1094; mastery, victory, B 3582; governance, control, B 3689; Maistrie, a masterly operation, G 1060. See **Maystrye**.
Majestee, *s.*; *his real majestee*, his royal majesty, *i.e.* high treason, Bo. I. p. iv. 183.
Make, *s.* companion, love, mate, M. P. iv. 17, 154; match, equal, H. F. 1172; mate, wife, B 700; husband, G 224.
Make, *pr. pl.* compose poetry, M. P. xviii. 82; *1 pr. s.* write, L. 188; Maked, *pt. s.* made, B 3318; *pp.* B 1722; Maad, B 3607; Makestow, *i.e.* makest thou, B 371.
Makelees, *adj.* matchless, T. i. 172.
Making, *s.* poetry, composition, L. 413.
Malapert, *adj.* impudent, T. iii. 87.
Male, *s.* bag, wallet, C 920; G 566.
Malefice, *s.* evil-doing, I 341.
Malgre, *prep.* in spite of, M. P. iv. 220.
Malisoun, *s.* curse, G 1245.
Malliable, *adj.* malleable, such as can be worked by the hammer, G 1130.
Malt, *pt. s.* melted, H. F. 922. See **Molte**.
Maltalent, *s.* ill-will, R. 330.
Man, *s.* man, esp. a devoted servant, one who has vowed homage, B 3331; *used for* one, B 43.
Manace, *s.* menace, A 2003.
Manasinge, *s.* threatening, A 2035.
Maner, *s.* manor, place to dwell in, M. P. iii. 1004.
Manere, *s.* manner, M. P. i. 29; ease of behavior, M. P. iii. 1218; goodly courtesy of manner, M. P. iv. 294; manner, disposition, L. 251; *of manere*, in his behavior, F 546; Maner, kind (of), M. P. iii. 471; *what maner man*, what kind of man, whatever man, M. P. ii. 24; *what maner thing*, whatever thing, M. P. ii. 103; *maner pley*, kind of game, C 627; *maner chaunce*, kind of luck, G 527.
Mannish, *adj.* man-like, *i.e.* unwomanly, B 782.
Mansioun, *s.* mansion (a term in astrology), F 50.
Mansuete, *adj.* gentle, T. v. 194.
Manye, *s.* mania, A 1374.
Mappemounde, *s.* map of the world, M. P. xii. 2.
Marbul, *s.* marble, F 500.
Marbul-stones, *s. pl.* blocks of marble, B 1871.
Marchaunt, *s.* merchant, B 132.
Marcial, *adj.* martial, T. iv. 1669.
Mare, *adv. comp.* more, R. 2709.
Mareys, *pl.* marshes, Bo. II. p. vii. 46.
Marie, *interj.* marry, *i.e.* by St. Mary, G 1062.
Maried, *pt. s. trans.* he caused to be married, E 1130.
Mark, *s.* a piece of money, of the value of 13 *s.* 4 *d.* in England, G 1026; Mark, *pl. i.e.* marks, C 390.
Market-beter, *s.* bully at fairs, A 3936.
Markis, *s.* a marquis, E 64.
Markisesse, *s.* a marchioness, E 394.
Martyre, *s.* torment, T. iv. 818.
Mary, *s.* marrow, C 542.
Mary-bones, *s. pl.* marrow-bones, A 380.
Mase, *s.* maze, labyrinth, L. 2014.
Mased, *adj.* bewildered, M. P. iii. 12; stunned with grief, M. P. vii. 322.
Masednesse, *s.* amaze, E 1061.
Maselyn, *s.* a kind of drinking-cup, B 2042.
Mast, *s.* mast, *i.e.* the fruit of forest-trees, acorns, and beech-nuts, M. P. ix. 7, 37.
Masty, *adj.* fattened, sluggish, H. F. 1777. Lit. 'fattened on mast.'
Mat, *adj.* dead, L. 126; struck dead, defeated utterly, B 935.
Mate! *interj.* checkmate! M. P. iii. 660.
Mate, *adj.* depressed, discomfited, R. 3167; exhausted, M. P. vii. 176.
Matere, *s.* matter, subject, M. P. iii. 43; theme, M. P. v. 26; Materes, *pl.* materials (of a solid character), G 779; Matires, *gen. pl.* of the materials, G 770.
Maugree, *prep.* in spite of; *maugree my heed*, in spite of my head, notwithstanding all I could do, M. P. iii. 1201; *maugree Philistiens*, in spite of the Philistines, B 3238.
Maugree, *s.* ill-will, R. 3144; *can maugree*, owe a grudge, R. 4399.
Maumetrye, *s.* Mahometanism, B 236.
Maunciple, *s.* manciple, H 25; I 1.
Mawe, *s.* maw, stomach, B 486.
May, *s.* maiden, B 851.
Mayde, *s.* maid, maiden, B 1636.
Maydenhede, *s.* maidenhood, G 126.
Mayntene, *pr. s. imp.* may he maintain, E 1171.
Maysondewe, *s.* hospital, R. 5619.
Mayster-hunte, *s.* chief huntsman, *the* huntsman, M. P. iii. 375.
Maystow, *for* mayst thou, L. 1952.
Maystres, *s. pl.* masters, Bo. III. m. ii. 14.
Maystrie, *s.* masterly act; *no maystrie*, an easy matter, L. 400.
Maystrye, *s.* mastery, M. P. x. 14. See **Maistrye**.
Mede, *s.* mead, drink, B 2042.

Mede, *s. dat.* mead, meadow, M. P. v. 184; Medew, L. 210.
Mede, *s.* reward, a bribe, B 3579.
Medeleth, *pr. s.* mingles, L. 874.
Medeling, *s.* admixture, Bo. I. p. iv. 312.
Medle, *v.* mingle, H. F. 2102; meddle, take part in, G 1184; dye, Bo. II. m. v. 11; Medly, *v.* mingle, mix, Bo. II. m. v. 8; Medleth, *imp. pl.* meddle, G 1424.
Medlee, *adj.* of mixed stuff, A 328.
Meed, *s.* reward, L. 1662.
Meel, *s.* meal, B 466.
Meel-tyd, *s.* meal-time, T. ii. 1556.
Meiny, *s.* crew, L. 2201. See **Meynee**.
Meke, *adj. pl.* meek, M. P. v. 341.
Meked, *pt. s.* meekened, R. 3584.
Melancolious, *adj.* melancholy, H. F. 30.
Melancolye, *s.* melancholy, M. P. iii. 23.
Melle, *s.* mill, M. P. ix. 6.
Memorial, *adj.* which serves to record events, M. P. vii. 18.
Memorie, *s.* memory, M. P. vii. 14; mention, remembrance, B 3164.
Men, *sing.* one, people, M. P. v. 22.
Mendience, *s.* mendicancy, R. 6657.
Mendinants, *s. pl.* begging friars, D 1906.
Mene, *adj. pl.* intermediate, M. P. vii. 286; *adj.* middle, Bo. III. m. ix. 31; middle, of middle size, T. v. 806.
Mene, *pr. s.* bemoan, R. 2596.
Mene, 1 *pr. s.* mean, L. 558; Mente, *pt. s.* meant, L. 309. Menestow, meanest thou, G 309.
Mene, *s.* mean, way of settling a difficulty, M. P. xi. 36; mediator, M. P. i. 125; the mean, L. 165.
Meneliche, *adj.* moderate, Bo. I. p. vi. 124.
Mening, *s.* meaning, intent, F 151.
Menstralcies, *pl.* minstrelsies, H. F. 1217.
Mente, *pt. s.* thought, M. P. v. 581; declared, M. P. vii. 160; Ment, *pp.* intended, M. P. v. 158.
Mentes, *s. pl.* mint, R. 731.
Merciable, *adj.* merciful, M. P. i. 1, 182.
Mercy, *s.* thanks; *graunt mercy*, many thanks, M. P. ix. 29.
Mere, *s.* mare, A 541.
Meridional, *adj.* southern, F 263.
Merier, *adj.* pleasanter, B 2024.
Merke, *adj.* dark, R. 5339.
Merken, *v.* brand, Bo. I. p. iv. 157.
Merlion, *s.* merlin, small hawk, M. P. v. 339.
Mervaille, *s.* marvel, wonder, E 1186; Merveille, E 248; *merveille of*, wonder at, F 87.
Mervayles, *s. pl.* marvels, M. P. iii. 288.
Merveillous, *adj.* marvellous, B 1643.
Mes, *s.*; *at good mes*, at advantage, R. 1453.
Meschaunce, *s.* mischance, misfortune, M. P. xviii. 47; misery, a miserable condition, B 3204; *with meschaunce*, with ill luck (to him), H 11.
Mescheef, *s.* mischief, harm, L. 1655; tribulation, trouble, H 76; Meschief, misfortune, B 3513.
Mesel, *s.* leper, I 624.
Messagere, *s.* messenger, M. P. iii. 133; Messanger, H. F. 1568; Messager, B 6; Messageres, *pl.* L. 1091.
Messagerye, the sending of messages (personified), M. P. v. 228.
Messe, *s.* mass, B 1413.
Meste, *adj. superl.* most, *i.e.* highest in rank, most considerable, E 131.
Mester, *s.* occupation, A 1340.
Mesurable, *adj.* moderate, C 515; F 362.
Mesure, *s.* measure, plan, M. P. v. 305; moderation, M. P. iii. 881; *by mesure*, not too much, M. P. iii. 872; *over mesure*, immeasurably, M. P. v. 300; *withoute mesure*, beyond measure, M. P. iii. 632.
Met, *s.* measure, I 799.
Metamorphoseos, *gen. s.* (the book) of Metamorphosis; it should be pl. *Metamorphoseon*, B 93.
Mete, *adj.* meet, befitting, M. P. iii. 316; meet, fit, L. 1043.
Mete, *s.* equal, M. P. iii. 486.
Mete, *s.* meat, L. 1108; food, meat, F 173, 618.
Mete, *v.* meet, find, M. P. v. 698; Mette, *pt. s.* met, M. P. v. 37; Metten, *pt. pl.* H. F. 227.
Mete, *ger.* to dream; M. P. iii. 118; v. 108; 1 *pr. s.* am dreaming, M. P. iii. 1234; Met, *pr. s.* dreams, M. P. v. 104; Mette, *pt. s.* dreamt, M. P. iii. 286; Me mette, *pt. s. impers.* I dreamt, L. 210.
Meth, *s.* mead, a drink, A 2279.
Meting, *s.* dream, M. P. iii. 282.
Meve, *ger.* to move, M. P. v. 150; *to him meved*, urged against him, L. 344.
Mewe, *s.* cage, coop, T. iii. 602.
Mewet, *adj.* mute, T. v. 194.
Mexcuse, *for* Me excuse, excuse myself, M. P. xvi. 36.
Meygned, *pp.* maimed, R. 3356.
Meynee, *s.* following, retinue, H. F. 194; assembly, H. F. 933; company, L. 1222; followers, army, B 3532; attendants, suite, F 391. See **Meiny**.
Meynt, *pp.* mingled, R. 1920.
Meyntenaunce, *s.* demeanor, M. P. iii. 834.
Micher, *s.* thief, R. 6541.
Miches, *s. pl.* small loaves, R. 5585.
Mid, *adj.* middle, M. P. iii. 660.
Mighten, *pt. pl.* might, M. P. v. 318.
Mikel, *adj.* much, L. 1175.
Mile-wey, *s.* 5 degrees of angular measurement, the third part of an hour, As i. 16, 19.
Milksop, *s.* a piece of bread sopped in milk:

hence, anything soft, especially a weak, effeminate man, B 3100.
Milne-stones, *s. pl.* mill-stones, T. ii. 1384.
Ministre, *s.* minister, B 168.
Ministreth, *pr. s.* administers, governs, Bo. III. m. vi. 4.
Minne, *imp. s.* remember, mention, M. P. xvi. 48.
Minstralcye, *s.* minstrelsy, a playing upon instruments of music, the sound made by a band of minstrels, F 268.
Mintinge, *pres. pt.* intending, Bo. I. m. ii. 4.
Miracle, *s.* miraculous story, legend, B 1881.
Mirour, *s.* mirror, M. P. iii. 974.
Mirre, *s.* myrrh, A 2938.
Mirthe, *s.* pleasure, amusement, A 766.
Mis, *adj.* bad, H. F. 1975; amiss, wrong, blameworthy, G 999.
Mis, 1 *pr. s.* lack, have not, M. P. vi. 47.
Mis, *s.* wrong, evil, L. (A) 266.
Misacounted, *pp.* misreckoned, T. v. 1785.
Misaventure, *s.* misfortune, unhappiness, M. P. iv. 229.
Misbileve, *s.* belief of trickery, suspicion, G 1213.
Misbileved, *pp.* misbelieving ones, infidels, M. P. i. 146.
Misboden, *pp.* abused, harmed, A 909.
Mischaunce, *s.* mishap, ill luck, M. P. i. 85; misfortune, L. 1826.
Mischef, *s.* misfortune, danger, M. P. iv. 58.
Misdeparteth, *pr. s.* parts or divides amiss, B 107.
Misdooth, *pr. s.* doeth amiss to, ill-treats, B 3112.
Misdrawinges, *s. pl.* way of drawing aside, Bo. III. p. xii. 117.
Misericorde, *s.* pity, M. P. i. 25, 35.
Misese, *pl.* injuries, Bo. I. p. iv. 81.
Misforyaf, *pt. s.* sorely misgave, T. iv. 1426.
Misgovernaunce, *s.* misconduct, B 3202.
Misgyed, *pp.* misguided, misconducted, B 3723. See Gye.
Mishap, *s.* ill luck, B 3435.
Misknowinge, *s.* ignorance, Bo. III. m. xi. 30.
Mislay, *pt. s.* lay awry, A 3647.
Misledinges, *pl.* misguiding ways, Bo. III. p. viii. 2.
Mislyketh, *pr. s. impers.* displeases, L. 1293.
Mislyved, *pp.* ill-behaved, T. iv. 330.
Mismetre, *pr. s.* scan wrongly, T. v. 1796.
Missat, *pt. s.* was not where it should be, M. P. iii. 941; *pt. s.* suited ill, R. 1194.
Missayd, *pp.* said amiss; *missayd nor do*, said or done wrong, M. P. iii. 528.
Misse, *v.* fail, M. P. v. 75; draw to an end, M. P. v. 40. See Mis.
Mis-set, *pp.* ill-timed, misplaced, M. P. iii. 1210.
Misseyest, 2 *pr. s.* speakest evil of, L. 323.
Mis-take, *pp.* mistaken, made a mistake, committed an error, M. P. iii. 525.
Mister, *s.* craft, A 613; need, R. 1426; *what mister men*, what manner of men, A 1710.
Mistihede, *s.* mystery, M. P. iv. 224.
Mis-torneth, *pr. pl.* turn aside, Bo. III. p. iii. 10.
Mistriste, *v.* mistrust, C 369.
Miswandringe, *adj.* straying, Bo. III. p. ii. 29.
Miswent, *pt. s.* erred, T. i. 633.
Miswey, *adv.* astray, R. 4766.
Mis-weyes, *s. pl.* by-paths, Bo. III. m. xi. 3.
Miteyn, *s.* mitten, glove, C 372.
Mixens, *s. pl.* middens, dungheaps, R. 6496.
Mo, *adj. pl. comp.* more (in number), M. P. iii. 266; *tymes mo*, at more times, at other times, E 449; *mo*, more than her, others, E 1039; *othere mo*, others besides, G 1001; *na mo*, no more, none else, B 695. See More.
Moche, *adj.* great, M. P. iii. 904; much, B 1169.
Mochel, *adv.* much, M. P. iii. 1102.
Mochel, *adj.* much, G 611; many, G 673.
Mochel, *s.* size, M. P. iii. 454, 861.
Moder, *s.* mother, M. P. i. 28; the large plate in an astrolabe, As. i. 2, 2; Modres, *gen.* mother's, C 729; G 1243.
Moeble, *adj.* movable, As. i. 21, 88.
Moeble, *s.* furniture, T. iv. 1380; Moebles, *s. pl.* movable goods, personal property, G 540.
Moevable, *adj.* fickle, Bo. IV. m. v. 38.
Moevabletee, *s.* mobility, Bo. IV. p. vi. 138.
Moeved, *pt. s.* moved, disturbed, B 1136.
Moevere, *s.* mover, A 2987.
Mokereres, *s. pl.* misers, Bo. II. p. v. 20.
Mokre, *v.* heap up, T. iii. 1375.
Molestie, *s.* trouble, Bo. III. p. ix. 122.
Mollificacioun, *s.* mollifying, softening, G 854.
Molte, *pt. s.* melted, T. v. 10. See Malt.
Mone, *s.* moon, M. P. iii. 824; Mone, *gen.* moon's, B 2070; Mones, *gen.* moon's, I 10.
Mone, *s.* moan, M. P. iv. 143.
Moneste, *pr. s.* admonish, R. 3579.
Monstres, *s. gen.* of a monster, M. P. iii. 628; *pl.* monsters, B 3302.
Monyours, *s. pl.* money-changers, R. 6811.
Mood, *s.* anger, R. 5162.
Moon, *s.* moan, lamentation, complaint, L. 1169, 1799.
Moorning, *s.* mourning, B 621.
Moot, 1 *pr. s.* must, shall, M. P. v. 642. See Mot.
Moot, *s. pl.* notes on a horn, M. P. iii. 376.
Moralitee, *s.* morality, B 3687; moral tale, I 38.
Mordre, *s.* murder, M. P. ix. 64.
Mordre, *ger.* to murder, kill, L. 1536; Mordred, *pp.* murdered, E 725.
Mordrer, *s.* murderer, M. P. v. 353.
Mordring, *s.* murdering, A 2001.
More, *adj. comp.* greater, M. P. vii. 240; More,

pl. in phr. more and lesse, greater and lesser, all alike, B 3433.

More, *adv.* more, further, in a greater degree, B 3745.

More, *s.* root, T. v. 25.

Mormal, *s.* cancer, sore, or gangrene, A 386.

Morne, *adj.* morning, A 358.

Morsel, *s.* a morsel; *morsel breed*, morsel of bread, B 3624.

Morter, *s.* mortar, M. P. ix. 15.

Morter, *s.* night-light, T. iv. 1245.

Mortifye, *v.* to mortify; lit. to kill; used of producing change by chemical action, G 1431.

Mortreux, a kind of soup or pottage, A 384.

Morwe, *s.* morrow, morning; *by the morwe*, in the morning, early in the day, H 16.

Morweninge, *s.* morning, M. P. iv. 151; dawning, M. P. iv. 26.

Mosel, *s.* muzzle, A 2151.

Moste, *adj. sup.* greatest, M. P. iii. 1006; chief, M. P. iii. 630; *the moste*, the most important, T. v. 440.

Mot, *pr. s.* must, M. P. iv. 157; 1 *pr. s.* may, M. P. iv. 267; Moten, 2 *pr. pl.* must, M. P. v. 546; Mote, *pr. pl.* must, M. P. iv. 198; Moste, *pt. s.* must, M. P. iv. 250; must (go), H. F. 187; Mote, 1 *pr. pl.* ought, L. 17; Mote, *pr. s. subj.* may, L. 843; is sure to, L. 1632; *mot I theen*, may I thrive, C 309; *foule moot thee falle*, foully (*i. e.* ill) may it happen to thee, H 40; Moste, *pt. s. subj.* might, L. 1573; *us moste*, it must be for us, *i.e.* it should be our resolve, G 946; Moot, 1 *pr. s.* I must, E 872; Mote, *subj. in phr.* mote I thee = may I thrive, B 2007; Mosten, *pt. pl.* must, should, L. 99.

Mote, *s.* speck, T. iii. 1603.

Motre, *v.* mutter, T. ii. 541.

Mottelee, *s.* motley, A 271.

Motyf, *s.* motive, incitement, B 628.

Moulen, *v.* moulder, B 32.

Mountance, *s.* amount (of time), L. 307; amount, R. 1562; amount, quantity, C 863.

Mourdant, *s.* pendant of a girdle, R. 1094.

Moustre, *s.* pattern, M. P. iii. 912.

Moveresse, *s. fem.* agitator, R. 149.

Mow, *pr. pl.* may, can, M. P. xvi. 4; Mowe, are able, M. P. iii. 438; Mowe, 2 *pr. pl.* may, M. P. iii. 208; can, M. P. iii. 552; 1 *pr. s. subj.* may, M. P. iii. 94; Mowen, *v.* be able; *mowen shewen*, become evident, Bo. V. p. iv. 178.

Mowes, *pl.* grimaces, H. F. 1806.

Mowinge, *s.* ability, Bo. IV. p. iv. 43.

Mowled, *pp.* grown mouldy, A 3870.

Moysoun, *s.* crop, R. 1677.

Moyste, *adj.* fresh, new, B 1954.

Moysty, *adj.* new (applied to ale), H 60.

Muable, *adj.* fleeting, T. iii. 822.

Muche, *adj.* much, R. 2704.

Muchel, *adj.* much, a great deal of, F 349.

Mullok, *s.* rubbish, refuse, confused heap of materials, G 938, 940.

Multiplicacioun, *s.* multiplying, *i.e.* the art of alchemy, G 849.

Multiplye, *v.* to make gold and silver by the arts of alchemy, G 669, 731.

Murmour, *s.* murmur, M. P. v. 520.

Murthe, *s.* mirth, joy, E 1123.

Murye, *adj.* merry, A 1386.

Musarde, *s.* dreamer, R. 3256.

Musice, music, Bo. II. p. i. 52.

Muwe, *s.* mew, cage, T. iii. 1784.

Muwe, *v.* change, T. ii. 1258.

Myle, *s. pl.* miles, G 555.

Myn, *poss.* mine, M. P. v. 437; mine, my (used before a vowel), B 40; (used after a name), E 365.

Mynde, *s.* reason, M. P. iii. 511; *have minde upon*, remember, M. P. xix. 26; Minde, *dat.* mind, remembrance, L. 18; memory, B 527; *in minde*, in remembrance, B 1843.

Mynour, *s.* miner, A 2465.

Mys, *pl.* mice, Bo. II. p. vi. 39.

My-selven, *pron.* I myself, M. P. iii. 34.

Myte, *s.* mite, thing of no value, G 511, 633.

N.

Nad, *for* Ne had, had not, M. P. iii. 224; Nadde, L. 278.

Naddre, *s.* adder, E 1786.

Nadir, the point of the heavens diametrically opposite to the zenith, As. ii. 6, 1.

Nadstow, hadst thou not, A 4088.

Naille, *imp. s.* 3 *p.* let it nail, let it fasten, E 1184.

Naiteth, *pr. s.* refuses, Bo. I. m. i. 28.

Nake, 2 *pr. pl.* make naked, Bo. IV. m. vii. 81.

Naked, *adj.* bare, M. P. iii. 978; Naked, *pp. as adj.* destitute, void, weak, G 486.

Nakers, *s. pl.* drums, A 2511.

Nale; *atte nale*, at the ale-house, D 1349.

Nam, *for* Ne am; *nam but deed*, I am only a dead man, M. P. iii. 204.

Nam, *pt. s.* took, G 1297.

Name, *s.* title, Bo. III. p. vi. 39; reputation, L. 1812.

Namely, *adv.* especially, L. 931; C 402.

Na-mo, *for* Na mo, no more, F 573; Na-more, F 289.

Nappeth, *pr. s.* naps, slumbers, nods, H 9.

Nart, *for* Ne art, art not, M. P. i. 26; G 499.

Narwe, *adv.* closely, tightly, L. 600.

Nas, *for* Ne was, was not, M. P. iii. 854; *I nas but*, I was simply, M. P. ii. 21.

Nat, *adv.* not, M. P. iii. 425; *nat but*, only, merely, L. 1899: quite, L. 2091.
Nat, *for* Ne at, *i.e.* nor at, B 290.
Nath, *for* Ne hath, hath not, A 923.
Natheles, *adv.* nevertheless, H. F. 2073; Natheles, M. P. ii. 111.
Nature, *s.* kind, race, M. P. v. 615.
Naturel, *adj.* natural, M. P. iv. 122.
Naught, *adv.* not, B 1701; not so, G 269.
Nay, *adv.* nay, no, M. P. iii. 1243; *opposed to* yea, E 355; *answers a direct question*, B 1793; surely not! M. P. iii. 1309; *as s.* nay, untruth, M. P. iii. 147; *it is no nay*, there is no denying it, B 1956.
Nayles, *s. pl.* nails, B 3366.
Nayte, *v.* say no to, deny, I 1013.
Ne, *adv.* not, M. P. i. 53; *conj.* nor, M. P. iii. 2, 74; *ne . . . thing*, nothing, M. P. iii. 1262; *ne . . . never*, never, M. P. iii. 1196; Ne, *adv.* not; *ne dooth*, do ye not, C 745.
Necesseden, *pt. pl.* compelled, Bo. III. m. ix. 9.
Neddres, *pl.* adders, snakes, L. 699.
Nede, *adv.* of necessity, M. P. iii. 1074; Nedes, *gen. as adv.* of necessity, M. P. iii. 1201; Nede, *adv.* necessarily, needs, G 1280.
Nede, *s. dat.* need, M. P. i. 44; Nedes, *pl.* necessary things, business, B 174; needs, G 178.
Nede, *v.* to be necessary, B 871; Nedeth, *pr. s.* needs it, it needs, F 65; Neded, *pt. s.* it needed, E 457.
Nedes-cost, *adv.* of necessity, A 1477.
Nedles, *s. gen.* needle's, G 440.
Needles, *adv.* needlessly, E 621; Needless, without a cause, E 455.
Needly, *adv.* necessarily, Bo. III. p. ix. 102.
Neen, *adj.* none, no, A 4185.
Neer, *adv. comp.* nearer, L. 314.
Neer, *adj.* nearer, G 721.
Neet, *s.* neat, cattle, A 597.
Negardye, *s.* niggardliness, M. P. x. 53.
Negh, *adv.* near, almost, M. P. iii. 907.
Neghen, *v.* draw nigh, L. 318.
Neigh, *adj.* near, nigh, F 49.
Neighebores, *pl.* neighbors, dwellers near, L. 720.
Neither nother, (in) neither the one nor the other, Bo. V. m. iii. 60.
Nekke-boon, *s.* nape of the neck, lit. neck-bone, B 669, 1839.
Nekkes, *pl.* necks, M. P. v. 671.
Nempnen, *v.* to name, B 507; Nempne, *v.* to name, tell, F 318.
Ner, *adv. comp.* nearer, M. P. ii. 19; Nere, M. P. iii. 38; *ner the les*, nevertheless, M. P. iv. 130; *ner and ner*, nearer and nearer, B 1710.
Nercotikes, *s. pl.* narcotics, A 1472.
Nere, *for* Ne were, 2 *pt. s.* wast not, M. P. iv. 112; *pt. s. subj.* should not be, M. P. iv. 35; were it not (for), M. P. i. 24, 180; Nere, *pt. s. subj.* were not (*put for* ne were), B 547.
Nescapest, *for* Ne escapest, escapest not, L. 2643.
Nest, *s.* nest; *wikked nest*, i.e. *mau ni*, or Mauny, B 3576; Nestes, *pl.* H. F. 1516.
Nevene, *v.* name, H. F. 562; *ger.* H. F. 1438; *pr. pl. subj.* may name, may mention, G 1473.
Never, *adv.* never, B 87; *never dide but*, never did anything that was not, M. P. iv. 297; *never the neer*, never the nearer, none the nearer, G 721.
Neveradel, *adv.* not a bit, C 670.
Never-mo, *adv.* never more, never, M. P. iii. 1125.
Nevew, *s.* grandson, H. F. 617; L. 2659; nephew, L. 1440; B 3594.
Newe, *adj. fem. as s.*; *a newe*, a new (love), H. F. 302; Newe, *adv.* anew, afresh, L. 103.
Newe, 2 *pr. pl.* renew, M. P. xxiii. 11; Newed, *pt. s.* became new, had something new in it, M. P. iii. 906.
Newfangel, *adj.* newfangled, taken with novelty, F 618.
New-fangelnesse, *s.* fondness for novelty, M. P. vii. 141; L. 154; F 610.
Nexte, *adj. comp.* nearest, next preceding, last, H. F. 1775; *adj. sup.* nearest, L. 2481; B 1814.
Nigard, *s.* niggard, B 4105.
Nighte, *v.* become night, M. P. v. 209.
Nighter-tale, the night-time, A 97.
Nigromanciens, *s. pl.* magicians, I 603.
Nil, *for* Ne wil, will not, R. 4344: M. P. iii. 92; *pr. s.* will not (have), M. P. iii. 586; will (she) not, M. P. iii. 1140; Nilt, *for* Ne wilt, wilt not, L. 758; Nil, 1 *pr. s.* I desire not, I dislike, E 646.
Nillinge, *s.* refusing, Bo. V. p. ii. 24.
Nin, *for* Ne in, nor in, F 35.
Nis, *for* Ne is, is not, M. P. ii. 77; *ther nis no more but*, all that remains is that, L. 847.
Niste, *for* Ne wiste, 1 *pt. s.* (I) knew not, M. P. v. 152.
Nobles, *pl.* nobles (the coin worth 6*s.* 8*d.*), H. F. 1315; C 907.
Noblesse, *s.* nobility, magnificence, B 3438; high honor, B 3208.
Nobley, *s.* nobility, splendor, H. F. 1416; nobility, assembly of nobles, G 449; state, F 77.
Noght, *adv.* not, B 94, 112.
Noght, *s.* nothing, M. P. iii. 567.
Noisen, 2 *pr. pl.* cry aloud, Bo. III. m. vi. 11.
Nolde, *for* Ne wolde, (I) would not, M. P. iii. 311; did not want, M. P. v. 90; *pt. s.* would not, M. P. i. 31; Nold'est, *for* Ne woldest, wouldst not, M. P. iii. 482.
Nombre, *s.* number, A 716.
Nome, *pp.* taken, L. 822. *Pp. of* Nimen.

Nones, for the, for the once, for this special occasion, for the nonce, L. 295; B 1165; *with the nones*, on the condition, H. F. 2099; L. 1540.
Nonnes, *s. pl. gen.* nuns', B 3999.
Noon, *adj.* none, M. P. i. 25; B 102; Non, M. P. iii. 941; Noon, *pl.* B 89.
Noot, *for* Ne woot, (I) know not, L. 2660; Not, *for* Ne not, (I) know not, L. 193; Noot, *for* Ne wot, 1 *pr. s.* I know not, B 892.
Norice, *s.* nurse, L. 1346.
Norishinge, *s.* nurture, bringing up, E 1040.
Norisshinges, *pl.* refections, Bo. IV. p. vi. 42; sustenance, Bo. I. p. vi. 105.
Nortelrye, *s.* good manners, A 3967.
Nory, *s.* pupil (lit. foster-child), Bo. III. p. xi. 265; Norry, Bo. I. p. iii. 16.
Nose-thirles, *pl.* nostrils, A 557.
Noskinnes, *for* Nones kinnes, of no kind, H. F. 1794.
Nost, *for* Ne wost, knowest not, M. P. iii. 1137; Nostow, *for* Ne wost thou, H. F. 1010.
Not, not; *not but*, only, M. P. iv. 121.
Not, *for* Ne wot, know not, M. P. iii. 29; (she) knows not, M. P. iv. 214. See **Noot**.
Notabilitee, *s.* a thing worthy to be known, B 4399.
Notable, *adj.* notorious, B 1875.
Note, *s.* musical note, peal, H. F. 1720; tune, M. P. v. 677; Note, note (of music), B 1737.
Note, *s.* need, business, A 4068.
Noteful, *adj.* useful, Bo. I. p. i. 81.
Notemigges, *s. pl.* nutmegs, R. 1361.
Notemuge, *s.* nutmeg, B 1953.
Not-heed, *s.* crop-head, A 109.
Nother, neither (of them), L. 192.
No-thing, *adv.* not at all, in no way, M. P. i. 171; in no degree, L. 88; in no respect, B 575; not at all, C 404.
Notificacions, *pl.* hints, Bo. V. m. iii. 26.
Notifyed, *pp.* made known, proclaimed, B 256.
Nouchis, *pl.* ornaments (containing jewels), settings (for jewels), H. F. 1350.
Noumbre, *s.* number, M. P. v. 381.
Noumbre, *v.* number, M. P. iii. 439.
Nouncerteyn, *s.* uncertainty, M. P. xviii. 46.
Noun-power, *s.* impotence, Bo. III. p. v. 24.
Nouthe, now; *as nouthe*, at present, A 462.
Novelryes, *pl.* novelties, H. F. 686.
Now and now, *adv.* at times, from time to time, occasionally, F 430.
Nowches, *s. pl.* jewels, E 382. See **Nouchis**.
Noye, *v.* harm, R. 3772.
Noyous, *adj.* harmful, R. 3230; troublesome, hard, H. F. 574.
Ny, *adv.* nigh, nearly, M. P. xviii. 78; nearly, L. 2347; *wel ny*, almost, E 82.
Nyce, *adj.* foolish, M. P. iv. 262; foolish, weak, B 1088.
Nycete, *s.* foolishness, M. P. iii. 613; folly, M. P. v. 572; Nycetee, folly, G 463.
Nyntene, nineteen, L. 283.

O.

O, *adj.* one, one continuous and uniform, H. F. 1100; a single, Bo. V. p. vi. 178; *num.* one, R. 6398; *adj.* one, B 52. See **Oo**.
Obeisant, *adj.* obedient, E 66.
Obeisaunce, *s.* obedience, E 24, 502; obedient act, E 230; *in your obeisaunce*, in obedience to you, M. P. ii. 84; *unto her obeisaunce*, in obedience to her, L. 587; Obeisaunces, *pl.* acts of obedience, L. 149; duties, delicate observances, L. 1268; submissive acts, acts expressing obedient attention, F 515.
Obeising, *adj.* obedient, yielding, L. 1266.
Objecte, *adj.* presented, Bo. V. p. v. 5.
Observaunce, *s.* reverential attention, homage, M. P. xxiii. 18; Observaunces, *pl.* respectful attentions, M. P. vii. 249; observances, duties, L. 150.
Observe, *v.* to give countenance to, favor, B 1821.
Occasioun, *s.* cause, L. 994.
Occident, *s.* West, B 297.
Occupye, *imp. s.* hold to, Bo. IV. p. vii. 113; *v.* to occupy, take up, F 64; Occupieth, *pr. s.* takes up, dwells in, B 424.
Octogamye, *s.* marrying eight times, D 33.
Of, *adv.* off, away, M. P. v. 494; B 3748; off, L. 2334.
Of, *prep.* as to, in respect of, M. P. v. 317; for, M. P. i. 136; from, M. P. iii. 964; with reference to, in, M. P. v. 299; as to, M. P. iii. 966; as the result of, upon, M. P. v. 555; *of al my lif*, in all my life, M. P. v. 484; *fulfild of*, filled with, M. P. vii. 42; Of, *prep.* by, L. 367; out of, L. 2664; during, B 510; with, G 626; by, E 70; with, for, B 1779, E 33; as regards, with respect to, B 90; *of grace*, by his favor, out of his favor, E 178.
Of-caste, *imp. s.* cast off, M. P. v. 132.
Offensioun, offence, damage, A 2416.
Office, *s.* duty, M. P. v. 236; duty, employment, B 3446; *houses of office*, servants' offices, pantries, larders, etc., E 264.
Offreth, *imp. pl.* 2 *p.* offer ye, C 910.
Of-newe, *adv.* newly, lately, E 938.
Of-taken, *pp.* taken off, taken away, B 1855.
Ofte, *adv.* often, B 278; Ofter, oftener, E 215.
Ofte, *adj. pl.* many, frequent, E 226.
Ofte tyme, often, M. P. iii. 1158.
Of that, *conj.* because, L. 815.

Of-thowed, *pp.* thawed away, H. F. 1143.
Oght, *adv.* ought, in any way, at all, M. P. iii. 1141.
Oghte, 1 *pt. s.* ought, M. P. iv. 216; Oghten, 2 *pt. pl.* M. P. iv. 28a: Oghte, *pt. s.* owed, L. 589; *impers.* (he) ought, L. 377; *pt. s.* became; *as him oghte*, as it became him, B 1097; *pt. s. subj.* it should behove us, E 1150. See Oughte.
Oistre, *s.* oyster, A 18a.
Oke, *s.* oak, M. P. v. 223. See Ook.
Olifaunts, *s. pl.* elephants, Bo. III. p. viii. 32.
Oliveres, *s. pl.* olive-trees, R. 1314; olive-yards, B 3226.
Olyve, *s.* olive-tree, M. P. v. 181.
On, *prep.* in behalf of, M. P. iv. 298; binding on, M. P. x. 43; *hir on*, upon her, M. P. iii. 1217; On, *prep.* upon, concerning, B 48; on, in, at; *on eve*, in the evening; *on morwe*, in the morning, E 1214; *on reste*, at rest, F 379.
On, *adj.* one; *everich on*, every one, B 1164. See O, Oon.
Onde, *s.* malice, R. 148.
Onerous, *adj.* onerous, burdensome, R. 5633.
Ones, *adv.* once, M. P. iii. 665; B 388; of one mind, united in design, C 696; *at ones*, at once, H 10.
On-lofte, *adv.* aloft, up in the air, in the sky, M. P. v. 683; aloft, *i.e.* still above ground, E 229.
On-lyve, *adv.* alive, M. P. vi. 94.
Oo, *num.* one, M. P. iii. 261; *adj.* one, G 207. See O, Oon.
Ook, *s.* oak, M. P. v. 176. See Oke.
Oon, *num.* one, M. P. iii. 39; always the same, M. P. iii. 649; xxii. 82; the same, *i.e.* of small consequence, M. P. iii. 1295; one and the same, C 333; *that oon*, the one, C 666; the same, B 2142; the same thing, alike, F 537; *oon the fairreste*, one who was the fairest, one of the fairest, E 212; *ever in oon*, continually alike, constantly in the same manner, E 602; *many oon*, many a one, E 775.
Ooned, *pp.* united, Bo. IV. p. vi. 88.
Open-ers, *s. pl.* medlars, A 3871.
Open-heeded, *pp.* bareheaded, D 645.
Opies, *pl.* opiates, L. 2670.
Oppresse, *v.* interfere with, suppress, M. P. x. 60; to put down, G 4.
Oppressioun, *s.* oppression, wrong, L. 1868.
Or, *adv.* ere, before, G 314.
Or, *conj.* before, M. P. iii. 128; H. F. 101.
Or, *prep.* before, M. P. iii. 234.
Ordal, *s.* ordeal, T. iii. 1046.
Orde, *s. dat.* point, L. 645.
Ordenaunce, *s.* ordinance, regulation, M. P. v. 390; Ordinaunce, command, M. P. x. 44; ordaining, governance, arrangement, B 763; provision, B 250.
Ordeneo, *adj.* well-ordered, Bo. IV. p. i. 50.
Ordenely, *adv.* conformably, in order, Bo. IV p. vi. 343.
Ordenour, *s.* ruler, Bo. III. p. xii. 119.
Ordeyne, *adj.* ordered, T. i. 892.
Ordeyned, *pp.* appointed, F 177.
Ordre, *s.* order, law, M. P. iv. 155; *by ordre*, in order, L 2514; order, class, G 995.
Ores, *pl.* oars, L. 2308.
Orfrays, *s.* gold embroidery, R. 1076.
Organs, *s. pl.* 'organs,' the old equivalent of organ, G 134.
Orient, the East, B 3504.
Oriental, *adj.* eastern; *and so*, of superior quality, L. 221.
Orisonte, *s.* horizon, T. v. 276.
Orloge, *s.* clock, M. P. v. 350.
Orphelin, *adj.* orphaned, Bo. II. p. iii. 36.
Orpiment, *s.* orpiment, G 759, 774, 823.
Osanne, *i.e.* Hosannah, B 642.
Ost, *s.* host, army, H. F. 186; L. 1906.
Ostoiments, *s. pl.* furniture, household goods, Bo. II. p. v. 130.
Ostesse, *s.* hostess, Bo. IV. m. iii. 26.
Otes, *s. pl.* oats, C 175.
Other, *pl.* others, M. P. iii. 891; Othere, *adj. pl.* other, B 3144; Other, *sing.*; *whenne* that other .. the other, *answering to* that one .. the one, F 496.
Other, *conj.* or, M. P. iii. 810; either, L. (A) 38.
Otheres, *pron. sing.* each other's, lit. of the other, C 476.
Otherweyes, *adv.* otherwise, E 1072.
Other-whyle, *adv.* sometimes, Bo. II. p. i. 132.
Otherwyse, *adv.* on any other condition, F 534.
Othes, *s. pl.* oaths, C 472; F 528.
Ouche, *s.* jewel, D 743.
Ought, *s.* anything, M. P. iii. 459.
Ought, *adv.* at all, M. P. iii. 337.
Oughte, *pt. s. impers.* it behoved (us), M. P. i. 119; *pt. s. subj.* it would become, *as us* oughte us = it would become us, it would be our duty, G 14; Oghten, 1 *pt. pl.* we ought, G 6; Oghte, *pt. s. indic.* it was fit, it was due, E 1120.
Oughtestow, *for* Oughtest thou, L. 1957.
Oule, *s.* owl, M. P. v. 343.
Oules, *s. pl.* awls, D 1730.
Ounces, *s. pl.* small pieces, A 677.
Ounded, *adj.* wavy, T. iv. 736.
Oundy, *adj.* wavy, H. F. 1386.
Oure, ours, M. P. v. 545.
Out-breke, *v.* break out, break silence, M. P. ii. 12.
Out-caughte, *pt. s.* caught out, drew out, B 1861.
Outen, *v.* to come out with, utter, display, exhibit, E 2438; G 834.
Outerly, *adv.* utterly, entirely, F 335.

Outfleyinge, *s.* flying out, H. F. 1523.
Out-hees, *s.* hue and cry, A 2012.
Outher, *conj.* or, M. P. iii. 1100.
Outlandish, *adj.* foreign, M. P. ix. 22.
Outrage, *s.* excess, M. P. ix. 5; Bo. II. m. v. 5.
Outrageous, *adj.* excessive, M. P. v. 336; violent, excessive, C 650.
Outraye, *v.* pass beyond control, E 643.
Outrely, *adv.* utterly, C 849.
Out-taken, *pp.* excepted (lit. taken out), B 277.
Over, *prep.* beyond, above, M. P. iii. 891.
Over-al, *adv.* everywhere, M. P. iii. 171; *over al and al*, beyond every other, M. P. iii. 1003.
Over-blowe, *pp.* blown over, past, L. 1287.
Overcomer, *s.* conqueror, Bo. I. m. ii. 17.
Over-goon, *v.* overspread, Bo. II. p. vii. 46.
Over-kerveth, *pr. s.* intersects, As. i. 21, 99.
Overlade, *v.* overload, L. 621.
Overlight, *adj.* too feeble, Bo. IV. m. iii. 38.
Over-loked, *pp.* looked over, perused, M. P. iii. 232.
Over-passeth, *pr. s.* surpasses, Bo. V. p. vi. 131.
Over-shake, *pp.* caused to pass away, shaken off, M. P. v. 681.
Overshote, *pp.*; *had overshote hem*, had overrun the line, M. P. iii. 383.
Over-skipte, 1 *pt. s.* skipped over, omitted, M. P. iii. 1208.
Oversloppe, *s.* upper garment, G 633.
Over-sprat, *pr. s.* overspreadeth, T. ii. 767.
Overte, *adj.* open, yielding, easy passage, H. F. 718.
Overthrowe, *v.* be overturned, be ruined, H. F. 1640.
Over-throwinge, *adj.* overwhelming, Bo. I. m. ii. 2; headlong, Bo. II. m. vii. 1; headstrong, Bo. I. m. vi. 28; revolving, Bo. III. m. xii. 47.
Over-thwart, *adv.* across, T. iii. 685; Overthwert, M. P. iii. 863.
Overtymeliche, *adv.* untimely, Bo. I. m. i. 20.
Over-whelveth, *pr. s.* overturns, turns over, agitates, Bo. II. m. iii. 21.
Owed, *pp.* due, Bo. IV. p. v. 20; Oweth, *pr. s.* owneth, owns, possesses, C 361.
Owene, *adj.* own, B 3198; *pl.* B 3584.
Owh, *interj.* alas, Bo. I. p. vi. 27.
Owher, *adv.* anywhere, M. P. iii. 776.
Oxes, *gen. sing.* ox's, E 207.
Oxe-stalle, *s.* oxstall, E 398.
Oynement, *s.* ointment, A 631.
Oynons, *s. pl.* onions, A 634.

P.

Paas, *s.* pace, step, L. 284; G 575; *goon a paas*, go at a footpace, C 866.
Pace, *v.* pass beyond, overstep, H. F. 392; go away, M. P. xxi. 9; *ger.* to pass, H. F. 841; *of this thing to pace*, to pass over this in review, H. F. 239; *to pace of*, to pass from, B 205; 1 *pr. s. subj.* er I pace = ere I depart, ere I die, F 494; *pr. s. subj.* may pass away, may depart, E 1092.
Pacience, *s.*; *took in patience*, was perfectly willing, M. P. iv. 40.
Paillet, *s.* pallet, T. iii. 229.
Paisible, *adj.* peaceable, M. P. ix. 1.
Pak, *s.* pack, set, L. (A) 299.
Palais, *s.* palace, M. P. i. 183.
Palasye, *s.* palsy, R. 1098.
Pale, *s.* perpendicular stripe, H. F. 1840. Still used in heraldry.
Palestral, *adj.* athletic, T. v. 304.
Paleth, *pr. s.* renders pale, Bo. II. m. iii. 4.
Paleys, *s.* palace, mansion (in astrology), M. P. iv. 54.
Paleys-yates, *pl.* gates of the palace, M. P. iv. 82.
Palinge, *s.* the making a perpendicular stripe, I 417.
Palis, *s.* palisade, stockade, Bo. I. p. vi. 45; paling, rampart, Bo. I. p. iii. 98.
Palled, *adj.* enfeebled, languid, H 55.
Pan, *s.* brain-pan, skull, A 1165.
Panade, *s.* knife, A 3929.
Paniers, *pl.* panniers, baskets for bread, H. F. 1939.
Panne, *s.* a pan, G 1210.
Panter, *s.* bag-net for birds, L. 131.
Papeer, *s.* pepper, G 762.
Papeiay, *s.* a popinjay, a parrot, B 1957.
Papelard, *s.* deceiver, R. 7283.
Papelardye, *s.* deceit, R. 6796.
Paper-whyt, *adj.* white as paper, L. 1198.
Paradys, *s.* paradise, heaven, B 3200.
Parage, *s.* dignity, high-priest, R. 4759.
Paraments, *s. pl.* rich array, A 2501.
Paramours, *adv.* passionately, T. v. 158; excessively (said of love), L. (A) 260; Paramour, *i.e. par amour*, for love, B 2033.
Paraunter, *adv.* peradventure, perhaps, M. P. iii. 779; perchance, peradventure, L. 362.
Paraventure, *adv.* peradventure, perhaps, B 190; by chance, E 234.
Parcel, *s.* (small) part, M. P. ii. 106.
Parceners, *s. pl.* partners, R. 6952.
Parchemin, *s.* parchment, Bo. V. m. iv. 15.
Pardé! *interj.* answering to F. *par Dieu*, M. P. iii. 721; Pardee, B 1977; E 1234.
Pardoner, *s.* seller of indulgences, A 543.
Paregal, *adj.* equal, T. v. 840.
Parements, *pl.* ornaments, L. 1106.
Parfay, *interj.* by my faith, B 110; by my faith, verily, B 849.
Parfey, *adv.* in faith, H. F. 938.

Parfit, *adj.* perfect, M. P. ii. 38; G 353.
Parfournest, *2 pr. s.* performest, B 1797; Parfourned, *pp.* B 1646.
Parisshens, *s. pl.* parishioners, A 482.
Paritorie, *s.* pellitory, *Parietaria officinalis*, G 581.
Parlement, *s.* parliament, deliberation, A 1306.
Paroche-prest, *s.* parish priest, R. 6384.
Parodie, *s.* period, T. v. 1548.
Parsoneres, *s. pl.* partners, partakers, Bo. V. p. v. 110.
Parten, *ger.* to share; to parten with, to participate in, L. 465; Parteth, *pr. s.* departs, L. 359; Parted, *pp.* departed, gone away, taken away, L. 1110.
Parting-felawes, *s. pl.* partners, I 637.
Part-les, *adj.* without his share, Bo. IV. p. iii. 49.
Partriches, *pl. gen.* partridges', H. F. 1392.
Party, *s.* part, portion, L. 482; B 17.
Parvys, *s.* church-porch, A 310.
Pas, *s.* grade, degree, M. P. iv. 134; *pl.* degrees, M. P. iv. 121; *thousand pas*, a mile, Bo. I. p. iv. 301; Pas, *s.* pace, B 399; Pas, *pl.* paces, movements, B 306. See Paas.
Passant, *adj.* surpassing, A 2107.
Passen, *v.* surpass, L. 1127; Passeth, *pr. s.* L. 275; Passed, *pt. s.* excelled, L. 1530; Passe, *imp. s. or pl.* pass (over), go (on), proceed, B 1633; Passe of, *1 pr. s.* pass by, F 288; Passeth, *pr. s.* passes away, F 404; Passed, *pp.* past, spent, E 610; Passing, *pres. part.* surpassing, extreme, E 240. See Pace.
Passing, *adj.* surpassing, excellent, G 614.
Passioun, *s.* suffering, M. P. iv. 255; passive feeling, impression, Bo. V. m. iv. 56; passion, suffering, B 1175.
Patre, Patren, *v.* patter, chatter, R. 6794, 7243.
Patroun, *s.* patron, M. P. iv. 275; protector, M. P. vii. 4; Patron, pattern, M. P. iii. 910.
Paunche, *s.* paunch, belly, M. P. v. 610.
Pawmes, *s. pl.* palms, T. iii. 1114.
Pax, *s.* a painted tablet kissed during the celebration of mass, I 407.
Pay, *s.* pleasure, M. P. v. 271; *more to pay*, so as to give more satisfaction, M. P. v. 474.
Payed, *pp.* pleased, satisfied, M. P. ix. 3; *holde her payd*, think herself satisfied, M. P. iii. 269.
Payens, *pl.* pagans, L. 786; B 534.
Payndemayn, *s.* bread of a peculiar whiteness, B 1915.
Payre, *s.* pair, M. P. iii. 1289.
Pecok, *s.* peacock, M. P. v. 356.
Pecunial, *adj.* pecuniary, D 1314.
Pees, *s.* peace, M. P. i. 69; B 130; *in pees*, in silence, B 228.
Pees, *interj.* peace! hush! B 836; G 951.
Pekke, to pick, B 4157.
Pel, *s.* peel, small castle, H. F. 1310.
Pelet, *s.* pellet, stone cannon-ball, H. F. 1643.
Penaunce, *s.* suffering, torment, M. P. i. 82; trouble, xviii. 79; self-abasement, L. 2077.
Penaunt, *s.* a penitent, one who does penance, B 3124.
Pencel, *s.* small banner, T. v. 1043.
Penible, *adj.* painstaking, careful to please, E 714.
Penner, *s.* pen-case, E 1879.
Penoun, a pennant or ensign borne at the end of a lance, A 978.
Pens, *s. pl.* pence, C 402.
Pensel, *s.* small banner, R. 6280.
Peraventure, *adv.* perhaps, H. F. 304; perhaps, perchance, C 935. See Paraventure.
Percas, *adv.* perchance, R. 6647; Per cas, by chance, L. 1967.
Perce, Percen, *v.* to pierce, B 2014; Perceth, *pr. s.* pierces with his gaze, M. P. v. 331.
Perchemin, *s.* parchment, R. 6584.
Percinge, *s.* piercing; *for percinge*, to prevent any piercing, B 2052.
Perdurable, *adj.* lasting, I 75.
Perdurabletee, *s.* immortality, Bo. II. p. vii. 113.
Pere, *s.* peer, equal, M. P. i. 97; B 3244; F 678.
Peregryn, *adj.* peregrine, *i.e.* foreign, F 428.
Pere-ionette, *s.* pear-tree, A 3248.
Perfit, *adj.* perfect, A 1271. See Parfit.
Perissed, *pp.* destroyed, I 579.
Perle, *s.* pearl, L. 221.
Permutacioun, *s.* change, M. P. xv. 19.
Perpetuely, *adv.* perpetually, M. P. iv. 20.
Perre, *s.* jewelry, precious stones, H. F. 124; Perrie, H. F. 1393; Perree, jewelry, precious stones, gems, B 3495.
Pers, of a sky-blue color, A 439.
Persaunt, *adj.* piercing, R. 2809.
Perseveraunce, *s.* continuance, G 443.
Persevereth, *pr. s.* lasteth, C 497.
Perseveringe, *s.* perseverance, G 117.
Person, *s.* parson, I 23; Persone, B 1170; Persoun, A 478.
Perturbacioun, *s.* trouble, Bo. I. p. i. 110.
Perturben, *pres. pl.* disturb, A 906.
Pervenke, *s.* periwinkle, R. 903.
Pervers, *adj.* perverse, self-willed, M. P. iii. 813.
Pese, *v.* appease, R. 3397.
Pesen, *pl.* peas, L. 648.
Pesible, *adj.* calm, Bo. I. p. v. 3.
Peter, *interj.* by St. Peter, G 665.
Peyne, *s.* pain, grief, distress, torment, M. P. iii. 587; iv. 96; pain, suffering, B 2134; trouble, care, F 509; *upon peyne*, under a penalty, E 586.
Peyne, *1 pr. s. refl.* I peyne me = I take pains,

C 330; Peyned hir, *pt. s. refl.* took pains, E 976; Peyneth hir, *pr. s. refl.* endeavors, B 320; Peyne me, *v.* put myself to trouble, H. F. 246; Peyneth himself, M. P. v. 339; Peynen hem, strive, L. 636.

Peynte, *v.* paint, M. P. iii. 783; color highly, H. F. 246; *do peynte*, cause to be painted, M. P. iii. 259; Peynted, *pp.* M. P. v. 284; Peynte, *v.* paint, smear, L. 875.

Peyre, *s.* pair, A 2121.

Peysible, *adj.* tranquil, Bo. III. m. ix. 58.

Peytrel, *s.* properly, the breastplate of a horse in armor, G 564.

Phitonesses, *pl.* pythonesses, witches, H. F. 1261.

Pigges-nye, *s.* pig's eye, a term of endearment, A 3268.

Pighte, *pt. s. subj.* should pierce, should stab, M. P. i. 163; *pt. s.* pitched, A 2689. *Pt. t.* of *picchen*.

Piked, *pt. s.* picked, stole, L. 2467.

Pilche, *s.* a warm furred outer garment, M. P. xx. 4.

Pilere, *s.* pillar, M. P. iii. 739; Piler, *as adj.* serving as a prop, M. P. v. 177.

Pilled, *pp.* robbed, L. 1262.

Pilours, *s. pl.* plunderers, A 1007.

Pilwe-beer, *s.* pillow-case, A 694.

Piment, *s.* spiced wine, R. 6027.

Pin, *s.* pin, small peg, F 127, 316.

Pinchen, *ger.* to find fault, H 74.

Piper, *s. as adj.* suitable for pipes or horns, M. P. v. 178.

Pissemyre, *s.* ant, D 1825.

Pistel, *s.* epistle, E 1154.

Pitaunce, *s.* portion of food, A 224.

Pite, *s.* pity; *pite were*, it would be a pity if, M. P. iii. 1266; Pitee, *s.* pity, B 292.

Pitous, *adj.* piteous, sad, M. P. iii. 84; pitiful, M. P. i. 88; sorrowful, M. P. vii. 9; piteous, L. 904; Pitousë, *fem.* full of compassion, L. 2582.

Pitously, *adv.* piteously, M. P. iii. 711; full of pity, M. P. ii. 18; piteously, sadly, pitiably, B 3729.

Place, *s.* manor-house, residence of a chief person in a village or small town, B 1910.

Plages, *s. pl.* regions, B 543; coasts, quarters, As. i. 5, 13.

Plastres, *s. pl.* plasters, F 636.

Plat, *adv.* flat, B 1865; flatly, bluntly, B 3947.

Plate, *s.* plate-armor, M. P. ix. 49; stiff iron defence for a hauberk, B 2055.

Plated, *pp.* plated, covered with metal in plates, H. F. 1345.

Platly, *adv.* flatly, T. iii. 786.

Platte, *adj. dat.* flat, flat side (of a sword), F 162.

Play, *s.* play, amusement, M. P. iii. 50; Playes, *pl.* contrivances, M. P. iii. 570. See **Pley**.

Playn, *adj.* plain; *in short and playn*, in brief plain terms, E 577.

Playn, *s.* a plain, B 24; Playne, E 59.

Pleding, *s.* pleading, M. P. iii. 615; v. 495.

Plee, *s.* plea, pleading, M. P. v. 485; Plees, *pl.* suits, M. P. v. 101.

Pleinedest, 2 *pt. s.* didst complain, Bo. IV. p. iv. 188.

Pleinte, *s.* complaint, lament, B 66.

Plenere, *adj.* plenary, full, L. 1607.

Plentevously, *adv.* plenteously, Bo. II. p. ii. 95.

Plesance, *s.* pleasure, delight, M. P. iii. 704; pleasing behavior, F 509; Plesaunce, pleasure, M. P. iii. 767; complaisance, M. P. vii. 212; pleasant thing, M. P. iii. 773; pleasure, will, E 501; kindness, E 1111; pleasantness, L. 1373.

Plese, *v.* please, M. P. v. 478; Plesen, F 707.

Plete, *v.* plead, T. ii. 1468.

Pletinges, *pl.* law-suits, Bo. III. p. iii. 77.

Pley, *s.* play, dalliance, M. P. iv. 178; delusion, M. P. iii. 648; play, sport, diversion, E 10, 1030. See **Play**.

Pleye, *v.* to amuse one's self, B 3524, 3666; Pleyde, *pt. s.* played, was in play, M. P. iii. 875; Pleye, *ger.* to amuse ourselves, L. 1495; to amuse herself, take a holiday, L. 2300; Pleying, *pres. part.* amusing herself, F 410.

Pleyinge, *adj.* playful, Bo. III. m. ii. 30.

Pleyn, *adj.* full, M. P. i. 13.

Pleyn, *adj.* open, honest, M. P. v. 528; plain, clear, B 324; Pleyne, smooth, M. P. v. 180.

Pleyn, *adv.* plainly, B 3947; openly, E 637.

Pleyne, *v.* complain, lament, M. P. ii. 108; *refl.* M. P. vii. 237; *ger.* M. P. iv. 286; *v.* to utter a plaintive cry, to whinny (said of a horse), M. P. vii. 157; Pleyned, *pp.* M. P. xxii. 76.

Pleyning, *s.* complaining, lamenting, M. P. iii. 599.

Pleynly, *adv.* plainly, T. ii. 272.

Pleynte, *s.* plaint, complaint, M. P. ii. 47.

Plight, *pp.* plighted, M. P. vii. 227; Plighte, *pt. s.* plighted, L. 2466; Plighten, *pt. pl.* L. 778; Plighte, *pp.* pledged, C 702.

Plighte, *pp.* plucked, D 790; *pt. s.* pulled, B 15.

Ploungen, *ger.* to plunge, bathe, Bo. III. p. ii. 53.

Ploungy, *adj.* stormy, rainy, Bo. I. m. iii. 11.

Plye, *v.* bend, R. 4389; E 1169.

Plyt, *s.* plight, T. ii. 712.

Plyte, *s.* plight, wretched situation, M. P. xxiii. 19; mishap, M. P. v. 294.

Plyte, *v.* fold, T. ii. 1204.

Poeplish, *adj.* vulgar, T. iv. 1677.

Poetryes, *pl.* poetical works, poems, H. F. 1478.

Point-devys, *s.* point-device, F 560.

Pointe, *s. dat.* point, place, M. P. iii. 660; *in*

point, on the point of, about to, M. P. iii. 13; *at point devys*, with great exactitude, very clearly, H. F. 917; Point, *s.* point; *fro point to point*, from beginning to end, B 3652; *point for point*, exactly, in every detail, E 577.
Pointel, *s.* style, *i.e.* stylus, writing implement, Bo. I. p. i. 4.
Poke, *s.* pocket, bag, A 3780.
Pokets, *s. pl.* pockets, *i.e.* little bags, G 808.
Pokkes, *s. pl.* pocks, pustules, C 358.
Pol, *s.* pole, As. i. 14, 10.
Polax, *s.* pole-axe, L. 642.
Polcat, *s.* polecat, C 855.
Policye, *s.* public business, C 600.
Pollax, *s.* pole-axe, A 2544.
Polut, *pp.* polluted, Bo. I. p. iv. 314.
Polyve, *s.* pulley, F 184.
Pomel, *s.* crown, top, A 2689.
Pomely, *adj.* dapple; Pomely-gris, dapple-gray, G 559.
Pomgarnettes, *s. pl.* pomegranates, R. 1356.
Pool, *s.* pole, As. i. 18, 22.
Popelote, *s.* puppet, A 3254.
Popet, *s.* poppet, puppet, doll; spoken ironically, and here applied to a corpulent person, B 1891.
Popiniay, *s.* parrot, M. P. v. 359.
Popped, *pt. s.* bedizened, R. 1019.
Popper, *s.* dagger, A 3931.
Poraille, *s.* poor folk, A 247.
Porche, *s.* Porch, Bo. V. m. iv. 1.
Pore, *adj.* poor, L. 1981.
Porisme, *s.* corollary, Bo. III. p. x. 186.
Porphurie, *s.* porphyry, a slab of porphyry used as a mortar, G 775.
Port, *s.* bearing, carriage, M. P. iii. 834; Porte, M. P. v. 262; Port, bearing, L. 2453.
Portatif, *adj.* portable, As. Prol. ii. 91.
Porte-colys, *s.* portcullis, R. 4168.
Porthors, *s.* breviary, B 1321.
Portraiture, *s.* portraiture, M. P. iii. 626; Portreyture, drawing, picturing, H. F. 131; Portreytures, *pl.* pictures, H. F. 125.
Portreye, *v.* portray, M. P. i. 81; draw, sketch, M. P. iii. 783.
Pose, *s.* cold in the head, H 62.
Pose, *pr. s.* put the case, suppose, T. iii. 310.
Positioun, *s.* supposition, hypothesis, Bo. V. p. iv. 54.
Possessioners, *s. pl.* members of endowed orders, D 1772.
Possessioun, *s.* large property, wealth, F 686.
Posshed, *pp.* pushed, driven, R. 4625; Possed, *pp.* T. i. 415; Posseth, *pr. s.* pusheth, tosseth, L. 2420.
Possible, *adj.* possible; *possible is me*, is possible for me, M. P. v. 471.
Post, *s.* pillar, support, A 214.
Postum, *s.* imposthume, abscess, Bo. III. p. iv. 15.
Potage, *s.* broth, C 368.
Potente, *s.* staff, R. 368; T. v. 1222.
Potestat, *s.* potentate, D 2017.
Pothecarie, *s.* apothecary, C 852.
Pouche, *s.* pocket, pouch, H. F. 1349.
Poudre, *s.* gunpowder, H. F. 1644; powder, G 760.
Poudre-marchaunt, *s.* flavoring powder, A 381.
Pounage, *s.* pannage, swine's food, M. P. ix. 7.
Pound, *pl.* pounds, F 683.
Poune, *s.* pawn at chess, M. P. iii. 661.
Pounsoninge, *s.* puncturing, I 418.
Pouped, *pp.* blown, H 90.
Pouren, *ger.* to pore, H. F. 1121; 1 *pr. s.* we pore, gaze steadily, G 670.
Pous, *s.* pulse, T. iii. 1114.
Poustee, *s.* power, R. 6484; Bo. IV. p. v. 15.
Poverte, *s.* poverty, H. F. 88; Povertee, M. P. iii. 410; Poverte, B 99; Povert, C 441.
Povre, *adj.* poor, B 116, 120; *as s.* poor, *hence* poverty, M. P. x. 2.
Povre, *adv.* poorly, E 1043.
Povreliche, *adj.* poorly, in poverty, E 213.
Povrely, *adv.* poorly, A 1412.
Povrest, *adj. superl.* poorest, C 449.
Poynaunt, *adj.* pungent, A 352.
Poynt, *s.* point; *in poynt is*, is on the point, is ready, M. P. i. 48; *fro poynt to poynt*, in every point, M. P. v. 462; a stop, G 1480. See Pointe.
Poyntel, *s.* pencil, stylus, D 1742.
Practisour, *s.* practitioner, A 422.
Praye, *s.* prey, M. P. i. 64.
Prece, *v.* press, R. 4198.
Preche, *v.* to preach, B 1179; Prechen, B 1177; Precheth, *imp. pl.* E 12.
Predicacioun, *s.* preaching, sermon, C 345, 407.
Preef, *s.* proof, experience, L. (A) 528; test, proof, G 968; the test, H 75. See Preve.
Prees, *s.* press, thronging, H. F. 1358; the throng of courtiers, M. P. xiii. 4; crowd, M. P. xvi. 40; Pres, press of battle, M. P. ix. 33; Presse, *dat.* throng, company, M. P. x. 52; crowd, T. ii. 1718.
Preferre, *pr. s. subj.* surpass, D 96.
Preise, 1 *pr. s.* I praise, F 674.
Premisses, *pl.* statements laid down, Bo. III. p. x. 137.
Prenostik, *s.* prognostic, prognostication, M. P. x. 54.
Prenten, *v.* imprint, T. ii. 900.
Prescience, *s.* foreknowledge, E 659.
Prese, Presen, *v.* press, R. 2899; Presing, *pr. pt.* R. 6436.
Presence, *s.* presence; *in presence*, in company, in a large assembly, E 1207.

Present, *adv.* immediately, M. P. v. 424.
Presentarie, *adj.* ever-present, Bo. V. p. vi. 88.
Presenting, *s.* offering, L. 1135.
Presently, *adv.* at the present moment, Bo. V. p. vi. 138.
Prest, *adj.* ready, prepared, M. P. v. 307; ready, T. ii. 785.
Prest, *s.* priest, B 1166.
Pretende, *v.* intend, T. iv. 922.
Preterit, *adj.* past, R. 5011.
Pretorie, *s.* the Roman imperial body-guard, the Pretorian cohort, Bo. I. p. iv. 106.
Preve, *v.* prove, H. F. 707; bide the test, G 645; to prove to be right, to succeed when tested, G 1212; Preved, *pp.* tested, G 1336; approved, E 28; exemplified, E 856; shown, F 481.
Preve, *s.* proof, T. i. 470, 690.
Prevey, *adj.* secret, Bo. IV. p. iii. 137.
Previdence, *s.* seeing beforehand, Bo. V. p. vi. 147.
Prevy, *adj.* privy, secret, unobserved, M. P. iii. 382; close, not confidential, H. F. 285.
Preyde, *pt. s.* prayed, L. 2294; Preyed, *pp.* E 773; Preye, *pr. s.* pray, B 3995.
Preyere, *s.* prayer, G 256.
Preysed, *pp.* praised, L. 536.
Pricasour, *s.* hard rider, A 189.
Prighte, *pt. s.* pricked, F 418. See **Prik**.
Prik, 1 *pr. s.* spur, rouse, M. P. v. 389; Priketh, *pr. s.* excites, L. 1192; Priked, *pp.* spurred, G 561; Prighte, *pt. s.* F 418; Prike, 2 *p. s. subj.* B 2001; Prikke, prick, goad, torture, E 1038.
Prikinge, *s.* spurring, hard riding, B 1965.
Prikke, *s.* point, H. F. 907; prick, point, critical condition, B 119.
Privee, *adj.*; *privee man*, private individual, Bo. II. p. iii. 84; secret, privy, closely attendant, E 192; privy, private, secret, B 204.
Privee, *adv.* privately, secretly, F 531.
Prively, *adv.* secretly, B 21.
Privetee, *s.* secret counsel, secrecy, B 548.
Privy, *adj.* secret, L. 1267, 1780.
Proces, *s.* process of time, M. P. v. 430; argument, Bo. III. p. x. 67; matter, L. 1914; narrative, history, occurrence of events, B 3511; *proces holde*, keep close to my story, F. 658.
Proeve, *s.* proof, Bo. V. p. iv. 91.
Proeve, 1 *pr. s.* approve, Bo. V. p. iii. 32; *pr. s.* shows, Bo. II. m. i. 19.
Profreth, *pr. s.* offers, L. 405; Profre, 2 *pr. s. subj.* mayst proffer, mayst offer, G 489; Profred, *pp.* offered, E 152.
Proheme, *s.* a proem, prologue, E 43.
Prolaciouns, *s. pl.* utterances, Bo. II. p. i. 54.
Prolle, 2 *pr. pl.* ye prowl, prowl about, search widely, G 1412.

Proporcionables, *adj. pl.* proportional, Bo. III. m. ix. 22.
Proporcioned, *pp.* made in proportion, F 192.
Propre, *adj.* proper, own, T. ii. 1487; fine, handsome, C 309; own, peculiar, B 3518; *of propre kinde*, by their own natural bent, F 620.
Propres, *pl.* own, Bo. I. m. vi. 22.
Proprete, *s.* property, peculiarity, M. P. x. 69; Propretee, property, T. iv. 392.
Prospectyves, *s. pl.* perspective-glasses, lenses, F 234.
Prospre, *adj.* prosperous; *prospre fortunes*, well-being, Bo. I. p. iv. 70.
Protestacioun, *s.* protestation, L. 2640.
Provost, *s.* prefect, Bo. I. p. iv. 72.
Provostrie, *s.* praetorship, Bo. III. p iv. 98.
Prow, *s.* profit, T. ii. 1664; profit, advantage, C 300; G 609.
Prowesse, *s.* profit, Bo. IV. p. iii. 80.
Prydelees, *adj.* without pride, M. P. vi. 29.
Prye, *v.* to pry, look, peer, G 668.
Pryme, *s.* the time between 6 and 9 A.M., B 1278, 4387; *fully pryme*, the end of the period of prime, *i.e.* nine o'clock, B 2015; *pryme large*, just past nine o'clock, F 360.
Prymerole, *s.* primrose, A 3268.
Prys, *s.* praise, glory, L. 2534; price, value, estimation, B 2087; fame, A 67.
Pryved, *pp.* deprived, exiled, M. P. i. 146.
Pryvee, *adj.* secret, A 2460.
Puffen, *v.* puff, blow hard, H. F. 1866.
Pulle, *s.* a bout at wrestling, a throw, M. P. v. 164.
Pulle, *v.* pluck; *pulle a finche*, pluck a pigeon, cheat a novice, A 652; Pulled, plucked, A 177.
Pultrye, *s.* poultry, A 598.
Puplisshen, *pr. pl. refl.* are propagated, Bo. III. p. xi. 153.
Purchace, *v.* get, obtain, win, M. P. xxi. 19; obtain, T. iv. 557; *imp. s.* may (He) provide, B 873; Purchaced, *pp.* procured, brought about, M. P. xi. 17; Purchasen, *ger.* to purchase, acquire, G 1405.
Purchasing, *s.* prosecuting, A 320.
Purchasour, *s.* conveyancer, A 318.
Pure, *adj.* simple, mere, H. F. 280; very, M. P. iii. 490; utter, M. P. iii. 1209; *the pure deth*, death itself, M. P. iii. 583; *adv.* purely, M. P. iii. 1010.
Purely, *adv.* actually, simply, only, M. P. iii. 5, 843.
Purfiled, *pp.* embroidered, fringed, A 193.
Purgede, *pt. s.* expiated, Bo. IV. m. vii. 4; Purged, *pp.* absolved, cleansed (by baptism), G 181.
Purpos, *s.* purpose; *to purpos*, to the subject, M. P. v. 26; purpose, design, B 170; *it cam him to purpos*, he purposed, F 606.

Purpre, *adj.* purple, L. 654.
Purs, *s.* purse, F 148.
Pursevauntes, *pl.* pursuivants, H. F. 1321.
Purtreye, *v.* draw, A 96.
Purveyable, *adj.* with provident care, Bo. III. m. ii. 6.
Purveyaunce, *s.*; *unto his purveyaunce*, to provide himself with necessaries, L. 1561; equipment, B 247; providence, B 483.
Purveyeth, *pr. s.* provides, foresees, foreordains, M. P. x. 66.
Putours, *s. pl.* whoremongers, I 886.
Putte, *ger.* to put, M. P. iii. 1332; Put, *pr. s.* (*for* Putteth), puts; *put him*, puts himself, L. 652; Putte, *pt. s.* set, L. 675.
Pye, *s.* magpie, T. iii. 527.
Pyke, *v.* peep, T. iii. 60; Pyke on, prick against, T. ii. 1274.
Pykepurs, *s.* pick-purse, A 1998.
Pyne, *s.* pain, hurt, M. P. v. 335; place of torment, H. F. 1512; suffering, B 1080; pain, suffering, the passion, B 2126; woe, torment, B 3420.
Pype, *s.* pipe, musical instrument, B 2005.
Pype *v.* to pipe, to play music, H. F. 1220; Pyped, *pp.* faintly uttered, H. F. 785.
Pyrie, *s.* pear-tree, E 2217.

Q.

Quad, *adj.* bad, B 1628.
Quaille, *s.* quail, E 1206.
Quaking, *pres. part.* quaking, E 317; Quaked, *pp.* B 3831; Quook, *pt. s.* quaked, shook, B 3394.
Quakke, *s.* hoarseness, A 4152.
Qualme, *s.* pestilence, H. F. 1968; Qualm, death-note, T. v. 382.
Quantite, *s.* quantity, vastness, M. P. v. 58.
Quappe, *v.* flutter, T. iii. 57; heave, toss (lit. shake, palpitate), L. 1767; beat repeatedly, L. 865.
Quayles, *gen. pl.* quails', M. P. v. 339.
Queinte, *adj.* curious, L. 2013.
Quek! *int.* quack! M. P. v. 499, 594.
Quelle, *v.* to kill, C 854; *imp. s.* may (he) kill, G 705.
Queme, *v.* please, T. v. 695; Quemen, *pr. pl.* T. ii. 803.
Quene, *s.* queen, M. P. i. 1.
Querele, *pl.* complaints, Bo. III. p. iii. 77.
Quern, *s.* hand-mill, M. P. ix. 6; *dat.* B 3264.
Querrour, *s.* quarryman, R. 4149.
Questemongeres, *s. pl.* holders of inquests, I 797.
Quethe, *pr. s.* say, cry, R. 6999.
Queynt, *adj.* quaint, R. 2038; curious, well devised, M. P. iii. 1330; Queynte, skilfully contrived, H. F. 126; curious, hard to understand, M. P. iii. 531; quaint, curious, F 369; Queynte, *pl.* curious, skilfully strange, M. P. iii. 784.
Queynte, *adv.* artfully, H. F. 245.
Queynte, *pt. s.* was quenched, A 2334.
Queynteliche, *adv.* curiously, cunningly, H. F. 1923.
Queyntise, *s.* elegance, I 932; contrivance, 733.
Quik, *adj.* alive, M. P. iii. 121.
Quiken, *ger.* to make alive, quicken, G 481.
Quikke, *v.* quicken, take life, burst forth, H. F. 2078.
Quiknesse, *s.* liveliness, life, M. P. iii. 26.
Quinible, *s.* a part sung a fifth above the air, A 3332.
Quirboilly, *s.* boiled leather, B 2065.
Quisshin, *s.* cushion, T. ii. 1229.
Quistroun, *s.* scullion, R. 886.
Quit, *adj.* free, quit, M. P. v. 663.
Quit, *pp.* rewarded, H. F. 1614; Quitte, *pt. s.* rewarded, requited, L. 1918; Quit, *pp.* set free, L. 1992. See **Quyte**.
Quitly, *adv.* freely, A 1792.
Quod, 1 *pt. s.* quoth, said, M. P. iii. 370; Quoth, M. P. iii. 90.
Quook, *pt. s.* quaked, trembled, L. 2317. See **Quaking**.
Quoynt, *adj.* quaint, R. 2038.
Quyte, *v.* requite, recompense, M. P. v. 112; *ger.* to remove, free, M. P. vii. 263; Quyteth, *pr. s.* requiteth, payeth, M. P. v. 9; Quyte, *v.* to acquit, free; *hir cost for to quyte*, to pay for her expenses, B 3564; Quyten, *v.* repay (lit. quit), G 1027; *quyte with*, to repay . . . with, G 1055; to satisfy, pay in full, B 354; *quyte hir whyle*, requite her time or trouble, lit. repay her time, *i.e.* her occupation, pains, trouble, B 584; 1 *pr. s.* I requite, C 420; Quit, *pp.* freed, G 66.

R.

Raa, *s.* roe, A 4086.
Racyne, *s.* root, R. 4881.
Rad, *pp.* read, G 211. See **Rede**.
Radde, *pt. s.* advised, M. P. v. 579; 1 *pt. s.* read, M. P. v. 21. *Pt. t.* of *reden*. See **Rede**.
Radevore, or **Radenore**, *s.* piece of tapestry, L. 2352.
Rafte, *pt. s.* bereft, L. 1855; Raft, *pp.* taken from, L. 2590; Rafte, *pt. s.* reft, B 3288. *Pt. t.* and *pp.* of *reven*.
Rage, *s.* a raging wind, A 1985.
Rage, *v.* play, toy wantonly, A 257.

Raked, *pp.* raked, B 3323.
Rakel, *adj.* hasty, T. iii. 429.
Rakelnesse, *s.* rashness, M. P. xvi. 16.
Rake-stele, *s.* rake-handle, D 949.
Rakle, *v.* be rash, T. iii. 1642.
Ram, *s.* the ram, the sign Aries, F 386.
Ramage, *adj.* wild, R. 5384.
Rammish, *adj.* ramlike, strong-scented, G 887.
Rampeth, *pr. s.* (lit. ramps, romps, rears, but here) rages, acts with violence, B 3094.
Rancour, *s.* rancor, ill-feeling, H 97; rancor, malice, E 432, 747.
Ransaked, *pp.* ransacked, come searching out, M. P. iv. 28.
Rape, *adv.* hastily, R. 6516.
Rape, *s.* haste, M. P. viii. 7.
Rape, *v.* snatch up; *rape and renne*, seize and plunder, G 1422. See **Renne**.
Rasour, *s.* razor, B 3246.
Rathe, *adv.* early, soon, H. F. 2139; Rather, *comp.* sooner, M. P. iii. 868.
Raughte, *pt. s.* reached, B 1921.
Raunsoun, *s.* ransom, A 1024.
Rave, 1 *pr. pl.* we rave, we speak madly, G 959.
Raven, *s.* raven, M. P. v. 363; the constellation Corvus, H. F. 1004.
Ravines, *s. pl.* rapines, I 793.
Ravinour, *s.* plunderer, Bo. IV. p. iii. 131.
Ravisable, *adj.* ravenous, R. 7016.
Ravisshe, *v.* snatch away, Bo. II. m. vii. 35; *part. pres.* snatching away, Bo. IV. m. vi. 44.
Ravisshing, *adj.* enchanting, M. P. v. 198; swift, violent, Bo. I. m. v. 4; destroying, Bo. I. m. v. 69.
Ravyne, *s.* ravine, prey, M. P. v. 323; preying, ravening, M. P. v. 336.
Ravysedest, 2 *pt. s.* didst ravish, didst draw (down), B 1659; Ravisshed, *pp.* ravished, overjoyed, F 547.
Rayed, *pp.* arrayed, adorned, M. P. iii. 252. Short for *arrayed*.
Real, *adj.* royal, L. 214, 1605. See **Ryal**.
Realtee, *s.* royalty, sovereign power, M. P. x. 60.
Reame, *s.* realm, kingdom, L. 1281; Reaume, L. 2091; B 3305.
Rebekke, *s.* abusive term for an old woman, D 1573.
Rebel, *adj.* rebellious, M. P. v. 457.
Recche, *v.* care, reck, M. P. v. 593; *recche of it*, care for it, F 71. See **Rekke**.
Reccheles, *adj.* reckless, careless, indifferent, M. P. v. 593; regardless, H. F. 668; Recchelees, careless, indifferent, B 229.
Receit, *s.* receipt; *i.e.* recipe for making a mixture, G 1353.
Receyved, *pp.* accepted (as congenial), acceptable, B 307; Receyven, *v.* to receive, E 1151.
Rechased, *pp.* headed back, M. P. iii. 379.
Reche, *v.* reach, give, M. P. iii. 47.
Reclaiming, *s.* enticement, L. 1371.
Reclayme, *v.* to reclaim, as a hawk by a lure, *i.e.* check, H 72.
Recomandeth, *pr. s. refl.* commends (herself), B 278; Recomende, *ger.* to commend, commit, G 544.
Recompensacioun, *s.* recompense, H. F. 665.
Reconforte, *v.* to comfort, A 2852.
Recorde, *s.* testimony, M. P. iii. 934.
Recorde, *v.* (to) record, recording, M. P. v. 609; Recording, *pres. p.* remembering, recalling, L. 1760; Recorde, 1 *pr. s.* remember, remind, A 829.
Recours, *pl.* orbits, Bo. I. m. ii. 15.
Recours, *s.* recourse; *I wol have my recours*, I will return, F 75.
Recovered, *pp.* gained, won, got, M. P. v. 688.
Recoverer, *s.* succor, M. P. xxii. 3.
Recured, *pp.* recovered, R 4920.
Reddour, *s.* rigor, M. P. x. 13.
Rede, *ger.* to read, M. P. iii. 98; *v.* interpret, M. P. iii. 279; advise, M. P. xiii. 6; 1 *pr. s.* counsel, advise, M. P. iv. 15; Redde, *pt. s.* read, interpreted, M. P. iii. 281; Red, *pp.* read, M. P. iii. 224; Redeth, *imp. pl.* read, B 3650; Rad, *pp.* read, G 211.
Rede, *adj.* red, L. 112. See **Reed**.
Rede, *adj. as s.* red, *i.e.* the blood, B 356; red wine, C 526, 562; Rede, *pl.* red, G 1095.
Rede, *adj.* made of reed; referring to a musical instrument in which the sound was produced by the vibration of a reed, H. F. 1221.
Redelees, *adj.* without reed or counsel; not knowing which way to turn, M. P. ii. 27.
Redely, *adv.* soon, H. F. 1392.
Reder, *s.* reader, M. P. v. 132.
Redily, *adv.* quickly, C 667.
Redoute, *v.* fear, Bo. I. p. iii. 24.
Redoutinge, *s.* glorifying, A 2050.
Redresse, *imp. s.* direct anew, reform, M. P. i. 129; Redressed, *pp.* roused, Bo. IV. p. ii. 157; Redresse, *v.* to set right, E 431.
Reducen, *v.* sum up, Bo. III. p. viii. 68.
Redy, *adj.* ready, E 299; F 114; dressed, F 387.
Reed, *adj.* red (of the complexion), M. P. iii. 470; Rede, *def.* M. P. v. 442; Rede, *pl.* M. P. i. 89; Reed, *adj.* red, B 452. See **Rede**.
Reed, *s.* advice, counsel, plan, M. P. iii. 105; profit, help, M. P. iii. 203; *withoute reed*, for which nothing can be done, M. P. iii. 587; *I can no reed*, I know not what to do, M. P. iii. 1187.
Reed, *s.* red color, red part, L. 533.
Reednesse, *s.* redness, G 1097.
Rees, *s.* race; *in a rees*, hastily, T. iv. 350.
Refect, *pp.* restored, Bo. IV. p. vi. 455.
Referred, *pp.* brought back, Bo. III. p. x. 202.
Reflexiouns, *s. pl.* ideas due to previous impres-

sions, H. F. 22; reflections by means of mirrors, F 230.
Refreyden, *v.* cool, T. v. 507.
Refte, *pt. s.* took violently; *how he Turnus refte his lyf*, how he robbed Turnus of his life, H. F. 457.
Refuseden, *pt. pl.* refused, E 128.
Refut, *s.* refuge, safety, M. P. i. 14, 33.
Regals, *pl.* royalties, royal attributes, L. 2128.
Regalye, *s.* rule, authority, M. P. ii. 65.
Regard, *s.* relation; *at regard of*, in comparison with, M. P. v. 58; *to the regard of*, in comparison with, Bo. II. p. vii. 138.
Regioun, *s.* rule, dominion, realm, M. P. xv. 25.
Regne, *s.* kingdom, realm, dominion, reign, B 389, 392, 735; Regnes, *pl.* B 129; governments, B 3954.
Regneth, *pr. s.* reigns, M. P. iv. 43; Regnen, *pr. pl.* M. P. iv. 50; Regned, *pt. s.* reigned, B 3845.
Rehersaille, *s.* enumeration, G 852.
Reherse, *v.* rehearse, repeat, tell, M. P. iii. 474; Rehercen, L. 78.
Rehersing, *s.* telling, recital, L. 1185; Rehersinges, *pl.* repetitions, L. 24.
Reighte, *pt. s.* reached, touched, H. F. 1374. *Pt. t.* of *rechen*.
Reioyse, *v.* rejoice, make to rejoice, M. P. i. 101; Reioysed, 1 *pt. s. refl.* I rejoiced, E 145.
Rekening, *s.* reckoning, account, M. P. iii. 699; Rekeninge, judgment, M. P. i. 132.
Reketh, *pr. s.* smokes, reeks, L. 2612.
Rekever, 1 *pr. s.* (for *future*), (I) shall retrieve, do away, H. F. 354.
Rekke, 2 *pr. pl.* care, reck, M. P. ii. 110; Rekketh, *pr. s. impers.* it recks (him), he cares, M. P. vii. 182.
Rekne, *v.* to reckon, account, B 110; *ger.* to reckon, B 158; Rekenen, reckon, count, E 2433.
Relayes, *s. pl.* fresh sets of hounds, reserve packs, M. P. iii. 362.
Relees, *s.* release, M. P. i. 3; relaxation, ceasing; *out of relees*, without ceasing, G 46.
Relente, *v.* melt, G 1278.
Relesse, *v.* to relieve, relax, B 1069; 1 *pr. s.* I release, E 153; Relessed, *pt. s.* forgave, B 3367.
Releved, *pp.* raised up again, revived, L. 128; made rich again, G 872.
Relik, *s.* relic, L. 321.
Reme, *s.* realm, B 1306.
Remedies, *s. pl.* Ovid's Remedia Amoris, M. P. iii. 568.
Remembreth, *pr. s.* recurs to the mind, M. P. iv. 150; Remembre yow, *imp. pl.* remember, M. P. iii. 717.
Remenant, *s.* remainder, M. P. v. 271.
Remeveth, *imp. pl.* 2 *p.* remove ye, G 1008.
Remewed, *pp.* removed, F 181.
Remorde, *pr. s.* vexes, plagues, troubles, Bo. IV. p. vi. 321; *pr. subj.* cause remorse, T. iv. 1491.
Remounted, *pp.* comforted, Bo. III. p. i. 9.
Remuable, *adj.* capable of motion, Bo. V. p. v. 39; changeable, T. iv. 1682.
Remuen, *v.* remove, Bo. II. p. vi. 59.
Ren, *s.* run, A 4079.
Renably, *adv.* reasonably, D 1509.
Rending, *s.* tearing, A 2834.
Renegat, *s.* renegade, L. (A) 401; renegade, apostate, B 932.
Reneyed, *pp.* denied, L. 336; Renеye, *v.* renounce, deny, abjure, B 376.
Renges, *s. pl.* ranks, A 2594.
Renne, *ger.* to run, M. P. i. 164; Renning, flowing, M. P. iii. 161; Renneth, *pr. s.* runs, *i.e.* arises, L. 503; spreads, L. 1423; *renneth for*, runs in favor of, B 125; Ronne, *pp.* B 2.
Renne, *v.* to ransack, plunder; *but only in the phrase* rape and renne, seize and plunder, G 1422. See Rape.
Renomed, *pp.* renowned, Bo. III. p. ii. 138.
Renomee, *s.* renown, L. 1513.
Renoun, *s.* renown, fame, L. 260.
Renovelaunces, *pl.* renewals, H. F. 693.
Renoveleth, *imp. pl.* renew, M. P. iv. 19; Renovellen, *pres. pl.* renew, I 1027.
Rente, *s.* rent, M. P. iii. 765; rent, *i.e.* revenue, B 3401.
Repaire, *v.* repair, return, F 589; Repaireth, *pr. s.* returns, F 339; goes, B 3885; Repeiring, *pres. part.* returning, F 608.
Reparaciouns, *pl.* reparations, making up, H. F. 688.
Repentaunce, *s.* penitence, A 1776.
Repentaunt, *adj.* penitent, A 228.
Repenting, *s.*; *without repenting*, so as to exclude any after-repentance, any after-regret, M. P. iv. 17.
Replet, *adj.* full, replete, C 489.
Replicaciоun, *s.* answer, ready reply, repartee, M. P. v. 536; involution, Bo. III. p. xii. 188.
Reportour, *s.* reporter, A 814.
Reprehende, *pr. pl.* blame, criticise, Bo. III. p. xii. 149; *v.* blame, T. i. 510.
Reprevable (to), *adj.* likely to cast a slur on, M. P. xv. 24; reprehensible, C 632.
Repreve, *s.* reproof, shame, C 595.
Repreveth, *pr. s.* reproves, L. 1566.
Reproeved, *pp.* stultified, Bo. II. p. vi. 139.
Repugnen, *ger.* to be repugnant (to), Bo. V. p. iii. 7.
Requerable, *adj.* desirable, Bo. II. p. vi. 35.
Resalgar, *s.* realgar, G 814.
Rescous, *s.* rescue, T. i. 478.
Rescowe, *v.* rescue, T. iii. 857; Rescowed, *pt. s.* rescued, L. 515.
Rese, *v.* shake, A 1986.

Resolven, *pr. pl.* flow out, Bo. V. m. i. 1; Resolved, *pp.* dissolved, melted, Bo. II. p. vii. 179.
Resonable, *adj.* talkative, M. P. iii. 534.
Resoun, *s.* reason, B 3408.
Resouned, *pt. s.* resounded, F 413.
Respit, *s.* respite, M. P. v. 648.
Resport, *v.* regard, T. iv. 850.
Respyt, *s.* respite, delay (of death), G 543.
Respyte, *ger.* to refuse to do, turn away from, despise, M. P. vii. 259.
Reste, *s.* rest, F 355; *at his reste*, as in its home, M. P. v. 376.
Restelees, *adj.* restless, C 728.
Resurreccioun, *s.* resurrection, opening (of the daisy), L. 110.
Retenue, *s.* retinue, suite, E 270.
Rethor, *s.* orator, F 38.
Rethorien, *adj.* rhetorical, Bo. II. p. i. 49.
Rethorien (*written* Retorien), *s.* orator, Bo. II. p. iii. 67.
Rethoryke, *s.* rhetoric, E 32.
Retorneth, *pr. s.* brings back, Bo. V. p. vi. 338.
Retorning, *pt. pr.* turning over, T. v. 1023.
Retourneth, *imp. pl.* return, E 809.
Retracciouns, *s. pl.* recantations, I 1085.
Retreteth, *pr. s.* reconsiders, Bo. V. m. iii. 64.
Reule, *s.* rule, M. P. x. 56.
Reule, *v.* to rule; *reule hir*, guide her conduct, E 327.
Reuthe, *s.* ruth, M. P. i. 127.
Reve, *s.* steward, bailiff, A 542.
Reve, *ger.* to bereave, rob of; *reve no man fro his lyf*, take away no man's life, L. 2693. See Rafte.
Revel, *s.* revelry, E 392.
Revelous, *adj.* sportive, B 1194.
Reven, *v.* take away, M. P. x. 50; Reveth, *pr. s.* forces away, M. P. v. 86.
Reverence, *s.* reverence, respect, honor, E 196; *thy reverence*, the respect shown to thee, B 116.
Revers, *s.* reverse, M. P. xviii. 32.
Revesten, *pr. pl.* clothe anew, T. iii. 353.
Revoken, *v.* call back, restore, T. iii. 1118.
Revolucioun, *s.* revolution, revolving course, M. P. iv. 30.
Reward, *s.* regard; *having reward to*, considering, M. P. v. 426; regard, consideration, L. 375.
Rewe, *v.* have pity, L. 158; to suffer for, do penance for, G 997; Rewen, *v.* to rue, have pity, E 1050.
Rewe, *s.* row, line, H. F. 1692; row, L. (A) 285. See Rowe.
Rewel-boon, *s.* (perhaps) rounded bone; or else, rock-crystal, B 2068.
Rewful, *adj.* lamentable, sad, L. 1838; sorrowful, sad, B 854.
Rewfulleste, *adj. sup.* most sorrowful, A 2886.
Rewledest, 2 *pr. s.* didst control, Bo. I. p. iv. 266.
Rewliche, *adj.* pitiable, Bo. II. p. ii. 74.
Rewme, *s.* realm, R. 495.
Rewthe, *s.* pity, ruth, E 579; a pitiful sight, lit. ruth, E 562.
Rewthelees, *adj.* ruthless, unpitying, M. P. v. 613.
Reyes, *pl.* round dances, H. F. 1236.
Reyn, *s.* rain, B 1864, 3363.
Reyne, *v.* rain, M. P. iv. 287.
Reynes, *pl.* reins, H. F. 951.
Reysed, *pp.* raised, M. P. iii. 1278; *ger.* to raise, G 861; Reysed, *pp.* made an inroad or military expedition, A 54.
Rhetorice, Rhetoric, Bo. II. p. i. 52.
Riban, *s.* ribbon, *used as pl.* ribbons, H. F. 1318.
Ribaudye, *s.* ribaldry, ribald jesting, C 324.
Ribible, *s.* fiddle, A 4396.
Ribybe, *s.* old woman, D 1377.
Riche, *adj. pl.* rich, B 122.
Richely, *adv.* richly, F 90.
Richesse, *s.* riches, wealth; *of knighthode he is parfit richesse*, M. P. xviii. 12; Wealth (personified), M. P. v. 261; richness, wealth, L. 1253; riches, B 107.
Rideled, *pp.* pleated, R. 1235.
Riden, *pp.* ridden, B 1990; *pt. pl.* rode, C 968.
Riet, *s.* the net or perforated plate revolving within the 'mother' of an astrolabe, As. i. 14, 4.
Right, *adv.* precisely, just, exactly, F 193.
Right, *s. dat.* right; *by right*, by rights, B 44.
Rightful, *adj.* righteous, well-doing, M. P. v. 55.
Right that, that very thing, M. P. iii. 1307.
Rightwis, *adj.* righteous, just, L. 905; Rightwys, L. 373.
Rightwisnesse, *s.* righteousness, C 637.
Rimpled, *pp.* wrinkled, R. 4495.
Ring, *s.* ring, concourse, L. 1887; Ringes, *pl.* E 255.
Risshe, *s.* rush, R. 1701; T. iii. 1161.
Rist, *pr. s.* riseth, rises, L. 810; *refl.* rises, L. 2680.
Rit, *pr. s.* rideth, rides, L. 1776.
Roche, *s.* rock, F 500; Roches, *pl.* M. P. iii. 156.
Rochet, *s.* rochet, linen vest, R. 4754.
Rode, *s. dat.* rood, cross; *by the rode*, M. P. iii. 924; H. F. 2.
Rode, *s.* complexion, B 1917.
Rody, *adj.* ruddy, red, M. P. iii. 143; ruddy, F 385.
Roes, *s. pl.* roes, M. P. iii. 430. See Roo.
Roggeth, *pr. s.* shaketh, L. 2708.
Roghte, *pt. s.* cared, recked, M. P. iv. 126.
Roignous, *adj.* rotten, R. 6290.
Rokes, *gen. pl.* rooks', H. F. 1516.

Roket, *s.* rochet, linen vest, R. 1242.
Rokke, *s.* rock, M. P. iii. 164.
Romaunce, *s.* romance, M. P. iii. 48.
Rombel. See **Rumbel**.
Rombled, *pt. s.* rummaged, fumbled, G 1322.
Rombled, *pt. s.* made a murmuring noise, rumbled, buzzed, muttered, B 3725.
Rome, *v.* roam, H. F. 2035; Romed, *pp.* roamed, gone, L. 1589; Romen, *v.* to roam, B 558.
Ron, *pt. s.* rained, T. iii. 640.
Rong, *pt. s.* rang, M. P. v. 492.
Ronnen, *pt. pl.* ran, M. P. iii. 163; Ronne, *pp.* run, B 2. See **Renne**.
Roo, *s.* roe, M. P. v. 195. See **Roës**.
Rood, *pt. s.* rode, E 234; Riden, *pp.* B 1990. See **Ryde**.
Roof, *pt. s.* rived, pierced, H. F. 373; *pt. s.* 'rove,' pierced, L. 661. *Pt. t.* of *Ryven*.
Roos, *pt. s.* rose, L. 112.
Roost, *s.* a roast, A 206.
Ropen, *pp.* reaped, L. 74.
Rore, *s.* uproar, T. v. 45.
Rose-garlond, *s.* garland of roses, H. F. 135.
Rosen, *adj.* made of roses, R. 845.
Rosene, *adj. def.* rosy, Bo. II. m. viii. 7.
Roser, *s.* rose-tree, R. 1651, 3059.
Rose-reed, *adj.* red as a rose, G 254.
Roste, *v.* roast, A 383.
Rote, *s.* a stringed instrument, A 236.
Rote, *dat.* root, L. 2613; an astrological term for the epoch of a nativity, B 314; the radix, the fundamental principle, G 1461; root, source, B 358.
Rote, *s.* rote; *by rote*, by heart, B 1712.
Roten, *adj.* rotten, G 17.
Roughte, *pt. s. impers.* it recked (him), *i.e.* he recked, M. P. i. 171; *pt. s.* recked, T. i. 496. See **Roghte**.
Rouketh, *pr. s.* cowers, huddles, A 1308
Roum, *s.* room, space, L. 1999.
Rouncy, *s.* hackney, A 390.
Rounde, *adv.* roundly, fully, melodiously, C 331.
Roundel, *s.* roundel (poem), M. P. v. 675; a small circle, H. F. 791.
Roundnesses, *pl.* orbs, orbits, Bo. IV. m. vi. 6o.
Rouned, *pt. s.* whispered, H. F. 2044; Roune, *v.* whisper, B 2025; Rowned, *pt. s.* whispered, F 216.
Rouninges, *pl.* whisperings, H. F. 1960. See above.
Route, *s.* rout, crowd, company, band, B 387, 650, 776.
Route, *v.* to assemble in a company, B 540.
Route, *v.* rumble, roar, murmur, H. F. 1038; *ger.* to snore, M. P. iii. 172.
Routhe, *s.* ruth, compassion, pity, M. P. iii. 592; a pity, M. P. iii. 1000; lamentation, L. 669. See **Reuthe**.
Routheles, *adj.* unpitying, M. P. vii. 230.
Routing, *s.* whizzing noise, H. F. 1933. See **Route**, *v.*
Rowe, *adj. pl.* rough, R. 1838.
Rowe, *adv.* roughly, T. i. 206.
Rowe, *s.* line, H. F. 448; Rowes, *pl.* rays or beams of light, M. P. iv. 2. See **Rewe**.
Rownen, *v.* to whisper, G 894.
Rowthe, *s.* ruth, pity, M. P. iii. 465. See **Reuthe**, **Rewthe**.
Royleth, *pr. s.* meanders, wanders, Bo. I. m. vii. 12.
Royne, *s.* itch, R. 553.
Roynous, *adj.* scabby, rough, R. 988.
Rubbe, *v.* rub out, M. P. viii. 6.
Rubee, *s.* ruby, H. F. 1362.
Rubible, *s.* kind of fiddle, A 3331.
Rubifying, *s.* rubefaction, reddening, G 797.
Ruddok, *s.* redbreast, robin, M. P. v. 349.
Rude, *adj.* common, rough, poor, E 916.
Rudeliche, *adv.* rudely, A 734.
Rudenesse, *s.* rusticity, E 397.
Ruggy, *adj.* unkempt, rugged, rough, A 2883.
Ruled, *pp. as adj.* well-mannered, L. 163.
Rumbel, *s.* moaning wind, A 1979.
Rumbleth, *pr. s.* moves to and fro with an indistinct murmuring noise, H. F. 1026.
Rum, ram, ruf, nonsense words, to imitate alliteration, I 43.
Rused, *pt. s.* roused herself, rushed away, M. P. iii. 381.
Ryal, *adj.* royal, L. (A) 146. See **Real**.
Ryde, *v.* ride at anchor, L. 968; Ryden, *pr. pl.* ride, E 784; Rood, *pt. s.* E 234; Riden, *pp.* B 1990.
Rym, *s.* rime (commonly misspelt *rhyme*), I 44.
Ryme, *s.* rhyme (*better* rime), L. 66.
Ryme, *v.* tell in rhyme (*or* rime), put into poetry, B 2122.
Ryming, *s.* the art of riming, B 48. See **Rym**.
Ryotoures, *s. pl.* rioters, roysterers, C 661.
Rys, *s.* twig, A 3324.
Ryse, *v.* to arise, get up, F 375; Rysen, *pr. pl.* rise, F 383; Roos, *pt. s.* B 3717.
Ryve, *v.* thrust, L. 1793; rive, pierce, C 828; tear, E 1236; Roof, *pt. t.* pierced, L. 661.

S.

Sable, *s.* sable, black, M. P. iv. 284.
Sachels, *s. pl.* bags, Bo. I. p. iii. 94.
Sacrifye, *v.* do sacrifice, L. 1348.
Sacrilege, *s.* sorcery, Bo. I. p. iv. 325.
Sad, *adj.* serious, grave, M. P. iii. 918; sober, steadfast, L. 1876; sedate, fixed, constant, unmoved, settled, E 693; sober, E 220; Sadde, *pl.* discreet, grave, E 1002.

Sadel, *s.* saddle, L. 1199.
Sadly, *adv.* in a settled manner, *i.e.* deeply, unstintingly, B 743; firmly, tightly, E 1100.
Sadnesse, *s.* soberness, staidness, M. P. vi. 29; constancy, patience, E 452.
Saffron with, to tinge with saffron, to color, C 345.
Saffroun, *s.*; *like saffroun*, of a bright yellowish color, B 1920.
Sakkes, *pl.* sacks, bags, L. 1118.
Sal armoniak, *s.* sal ammoniac, G 798.
Sal peter, *s.* saltpetre, G 808.
Sal preparat, *s.* prepared salt, G 810.
Sal tartre, *s.* salt of tartar, G 810.
Salte, *adj. pl.* salt, E 1084.
Salued, *pt. s.* saluted, R. 3610; Salueth, *pr. s.* saluteth, M. P. iv. 146; Salue, *v.* salute, greet, B 1723; Salewed, *pp.* F 1310.
Salvacioun, *s.* salvation, M. P. iv. 213.
Salwes, *s. pl.* willows, D 655.
Samit, *s.* samite, T. i. 109.
Sangwyn, *adj.* red, A 333.
Sans, *prep.* without, B 501.
Saphires, *s. pl.* sapphires, B 3658.
Sapience, *s.* wisdom, G 101; *pl.* kinds of intelligence, G 338.
Sarge, *s.* serge, A 2568.
Sarpulers, *s. pl.* sacks made of coarse canvas, Bo. I. p. iii. 94.
Sarsinesshe, *adj.* made of Saracen cloth, soft silk, R. 1188.
Sat, *pt. s.* sat; *sat on knees*, knelt, M. P. iii. 106; *hit sat me sore*, it was very painful for me, M. P. iii. 1220; Sat, *pt. s.* suited, L. 1735.
Sauf, *adj.* safe, M. P. i. 27, 57; B 343; G 950.
Sauf, *prep.* save, except, M. P. ii. 50.
Saufly, *adv.* safely, with safety, H. F. 291; certainly, E 870.
Saugh, *pt. s.* saw, M. P. i. 89.
Saule, *s.* soul, A 4187.
Sauns, *prep.* without, H. F. 188; *sauns faile*, without fail, certainly, H. F. 429.
Sauter, *s.* psalter, R. 431.
Sautrye, *s.* psaltery, small harp, A 296.
Savacioun, *s.* saving from death; *withoute any savacioun*, without saving any, H. F. 208.
Save, *prep.* save, except, B 3214.
Save, *s.* sage (the herb), A 2713.
Save, *v.* to save, keep, E 683; 3 *imp. s.* may he save, E 505, 1064; Saved, *pp.* kept inviolate, F 531.
Save-garde, *s.* safe-conduct, T. iv. 139.
Saveour, *s.* savior, M. P. xix. 16.
Savetee, *s.* safety, R. 6869.
Savorous, *adj.* pleasant, toothsome, R. 84, 2812.
Savour, *s.* pleasant taste, liking, pleasure, M. P. x. 20; smell, G 887; pleasantness, F 404; Savours, *pl.* odors, M. P. v. 274.
Savour, *imp. s.* have relish for, M. P. xiii. 5.
Sawcefleem, *adj.* pimpled, A 625.
Sawe, *s.* saying, H. F. 2089; discourse, G 691; Sawes, *pl.* tales, H. F. 676.
Say, *v.* assay, R. 5162.
Say, 1 *pt. s.* saw, M. P. iii. 806; v. 211.
Saylours, *s. pl.* dancers, R. 770.
Scabbe, *s.* scab, a disease of sheep, C 358.
Scale, *s.* scale, circle under cross-line of astrolabe, As. i. 12, 3.
Scales, *pp.* scales of fish, M. P. v. 189.
Scalle, *s.* scab, M. P. viii. 3.
Scalled, *adj.* scabby, A 627.
Scantilone, *s.* mason's rule, R. 7064.
Scaped, *pp.* escaped, B 1151.
Scarmishing, *s.* skirmish, L. 1910.
Scarsetee, *s.* scarcity, G 1393.
Scarsly, *adv.* scarcely, B 3602.
Scatered, *pp.* scattered, G 914.
Scathe, *s.* scathe, harm, pity, E 1172.
Science, *s.* learning, learned writing, B 1666.
Sclat, *s.* slate, M. P. xi. 34.
Sclaundre, *s.* slander, H. F. 1580; ill fame, E 722.
Sclendre, *adj. pl.* slender, E 1198.
Scochouns, *s. pl.* escutcheons, R. 893.
Scole, *s.* school, B 1685, 1694.
Scoleward; *to scoleward*, toward school, B 1739.
Scoleye, *ger.* to study, A 302.
Scomes, *s. pl.* foam, lather, Bo. IV. m. vii. 70.
Scorkleth, *pr. s.* scorches, shrivels, Bo. II. m. vi. 31.
Scorpioun, *s.* scorpion, M. P. iii. 636; sign of the Scorpion, H. F. 948.
Scourges, *s. pl.* scourges, whips, plagues, E 1157.
Scourging, *s.* correction, M. P. iv. 42.
Scrippe, *s.* scrip, R. 7405.
Scripture, *s.* inscription, T. iii. 1369; passage of writing, L. 1144.
Scrit, *s.* writing, T. ii. 1130.
Scrivenish, *adv.* like a scribe, T. ii. 1026.
Scriveyn, *s.* scribe, M. P. viii. 1.
Seche, *ger.* to seek, A 784.
Secree, *adj.* secret, trusty, M. P. v. 395.
Secree, *s.* a secret, B 3211; *secree of secrees*, secret of secrets, Lat. Secreta Secretorum (the name of a book), G 1447.
Secreenesse, *s.* secrecy, B 773.
Secrely, *adv.* secretly, E 763.
Secte, *s.* sect, company, E 1171; religion, faith (lit. following), F 17.
Sede, *v.* bear seed, M. P. vii. 306.
See, *s.* sea, M. P. i. 50.
See, *s.* seat, T. iv. 1023; seat of empire, B 3339; *pl.* seats, H. F. 1210.
See, *ger.* to see, look on; *on to see*, to look upon, M. P. iii. 1177; *as fut.* shall see, M. P. iv. 190;

Saugh, *pt. s.* L. 16; Seigh, L. 795; Sey, *pt. s.* saw, T. ii. 277; B 1, 7; Seyn, *pp.* seen, B 1863; See, 3 *imp. s.* may (He) behold, *or* protect, B 156.
Seed-foul, *s.* birds living on seeds, M. P. v. 512.
Seek, *adj.* sick, M. P. v. 161; Seke, M. P. iii. 557; *def. as s.* sick man, man in a fever, M. P. v. 104.
Seel, *s.* seal, B 882.
Seel, *s.* happiness, A 4239.
Seemlinesse, *s.* dignity of bearing, L. 1041.
Seen, *v.* see, B 182.
Seestow, seest thou, H. F. 911.
Seeth, *pt. s.* seethed, boiled, E 227.
Sege, *s.* throne, Bo. I. p. iv. 318; siege, L. 1696.
Seggen, *pr. pl.* say, T. iv. 194.
Seigh, *pt. s.* saw, L. 795.
Seint, *s.* saint, B 1631; Seintes, *gen. pl.* B 61.
Seintuarie, *s.* sanctuary, I 781.
Seistow, sayest thou, B 110.
Seith, *pr. s.* says, M. P. v. 22.
Seke, *adj. pl.* sick, L. 1203.
Seke, *v.* search through, B 60; Seken, *ger.* to seek, *i.e.* a matter for search, G 874; Seken to, 1 *pr. pl.* come seeking for, press towards, M. P. ii. 91.
Sekernes, *s.* security, M. P. vii. 345.
Sekirly, *adv.* certainly, L. (A) 163.
Selde, *adj. pl.* seldom, few; *selde tyme*, few times, E 146.
Selde, *adv.* seldom, T. iv. 423; E 427.
Seled, *pp.* sealed, B 736.
Selfe, *adj.* self, same, M. P. v. 96; Selve, very, H. F. 1157; *thy selve neighebour*, thy very neighbor, B 115.
Selily, *adv.* happily, Bo. II. p. iv. 108.
Selinesse, *s.* happiness, T. iii. 825.
Selle, *v.* give, sell, A 278.
Selly, *adj.* blessed, delightful, H. F. 513.
Sely, kind, M. P. iv. 89; poor, innocent, M. P. iv. 141; innocent, unsuspecting, L. 2346; foolish, hapless, L. 1336; good, innocent, B 1702; holy, B 682; innocent, C 292; silly, simple, G 1076.
Semblable, *adj.* like, I 408.
Semblaunt, *s.* appearance, R. 3205; Semblant, appearance, look, L. 1735; outward show, semblance, E 928.
Seme, *pr. s. subj.* seem, M. P. xiv. 13; *v.* seem, appear, F 102; Semed, *pt. s. impers.* it seemed, E 396; *him semed*, it appeared to them, they supposed, F 56; *the peple semed*, it seemed to the people, the people supposed, F 201.
Semelihede, *s.* goodliness, R. 1130.
Semely, *adj.* seemly, comely, B 1919.
Semicope, *s.* a short cope, A 262.
Seming, *s.* appearance, M. P. iii. 944; Seminge, *s.* appearance; *to my seminge*, as it appears to me, B 1838.
Semisoun, *s.* low noise, A 3697.
Senatorie, *s.* senatorial rank, Bo. III. p. iv. 102.
Sencer, *s.* censer, A 3340.
Sendal, *s.* a thin silk, A 440.
Sendeth, 2 *imp. pl.* send ye, C 614; Sente, *pt. s. subj.* would send, B 1091; Sent, *pr. s.* sendeth, sends, T. ii. 1123.
Sene, *adj.* visible, evident, manifest, M. P. ii. 94; L. 340; apparent, F 645.
Sene, *ger.* to see, M. P. v. 329; to look at, L. 2649; *on to sene*, to look on, L. 2425; *to sene*, to be seen, to seem, L. 224.
Senith, *s.* zenith, As. ii. 26, 15.
Sensibilitees, *s. pl.* perceptions, Bo. V. m. iv. 8.
Sensible, *adj.* perceptible by the senses, Bo. V. p. iv. 232.
Sentement, *s.* feeling, passion, L. 69.
Sentence, *s.* opinion, decision, M. P. v. 530; sense, meaning, tenor, theme, M. P. iv. 24; H. F. 1100; decision, speech, M. P. v. 383; opinion, B 113, 3992; meaning, subject, result, B 1753; judgment, order, I 17; verdict, G 366; general meaning, I 58.
Septemtrioun, *s.* north, B 3657.
Sepulture, *s.* burial, entombment, L. 2553; sepulchre, C 558.
Sereyns, *s. pl.* sirens, R. 684.
Sergeant, *s.* sergeant, officer, E 519.
Sermone, *ger.* to preach, speak, C 879.
Sermoning, *s.* talking, L. 1184.
Sermoun, *s.* discourse, L. 2025; Sermouns, *pl.* writings, B 87.
Servage, *s.* service, M. P. iii. 769; servitude, thraldom, bondage, A 1946; B 368.
Servant, *s.* lover, servant, L. 1957.
Servisable, *adj.* serviceable, useful, E 979.
Servitute, *s.* servitude, E 798.
Servyse, *s.* service, musical performance, M. P. iii. 302; service, serving, E 603.
Sese, *pr. s. subj.* seize, M. P. v. 481; Sesed, *pp.* caught, M. P. iv. 240.
Sesoun, *s.* season, G 1343.
Set, *pr. s.* setteth, M. P. ii. 101; putteth, M. P. iii. 635; *pp.* appointed, M. P. iv. 52; *wel set*, seemly, M. P. iii. 828; Sete, *v.* were seated, T. ii. 81; Sete, *pp.* sat, L. 1109; Sette me, 1 *pt. s.* put myself, placed myself, L. 115; *setten hem*, seated themselves, L. 301; *sette hir*, sat, B 3295; *sette her on knees*, cast herself on her knees, B 638; *sette hem*, seated themselves, C 775; *setten hem adoun*, set themselves, G 396; Set, *pp.* placed, put, B 4401 Seten, *pt. pl.* sat, B 3734.
Sete, *subj.* would befit, T. ii. 117.
Setewale, *s.* valerian, R. 1370. See Cetewale.
Sethe, *v.* boil, seethe, A 383.

Seur, *adv.* surely, T. iii. 1633.
Seurtee, *s.* security, M. P. ix. 46; security, surety, B 243.
Sewe, *ger.* to follow, M. P. xiv. 4; Seweth, *pr. s.* follows as a consequence, H. F. 840; Sewed, *pt. s.* pursued, B 4527.
Sewes, *s. pl.* lit. juices, gravies; prob. used here for seasoned dishes, delicacies, F 67.
Sewing, *adj.* conformable, in proportion, similar, M. P. iii. 959.
Sexteyn, *s.* sacristan, B 3126.
Sey, 1 *pt. s.* saw, M. P. iii. 1089; Seyen, *pt. pl.* M. P. iii. 842; Seyn, *pp.* M. P. iii. 854.
Seyl, *s.* sail, A 696.
Seyn, *pp.* seen, B 1863.
Seyn, *v.* say, M. P. ii. 51; Sey, *v.* tell, M. P. v. 126; *ger.* to say, M. P. iii. 1090; To seye, to be said, M. P. ii. 21; To seyne, M. P. ii. 77; Seystow, *for* Seyst thou, sayest thou, M. P. x. 27; Seyd, *pp.* B 49; Seydestow, saidst thou, G 334.
Seynd, *pp.* singed, broiled, B 4035.
Seynt, *s.* saint, M. P. iii. 1319.
Shad, *pp.* distributed, Bo. I. m. i. 19.
Shadde, *pt. s.* shed, poured, B 3921.
Shadwe, *s.* shadow, shade, M. P. iii. 426; scene, Bo. II. p. iii. 98; shadow, B 7, 10.
Shaftes, *pl.* shafts, arrows, M. P. v. 180.
Shal, 1 *pr. s.* must, am to be, M. P. ii. 53; *pr. s.* is to be, H. F. 82; owe, T. iii. 791; will, L. 1276; 1 *pr. s.* I shall (do so), F 688; Shaltow, shalt thou, A 3575; Shul, 1 *pr. pl.* we must, E 38.
Shale, *s.* shell, H. F. 1281.
Shalmyes, *pl.* shawms, H. F. 1218.
Shamefast, *adj.* modest, shy, L. 1535; Shamfast, A 2055; C 55.
Shames, *gen. s.* of shame, L. 2064; *shames deth*, death of shame, *i.e.* shameful death, B 819.
Shamfastnesse, *s.* modesty, A 840.
Shap, *s.* shape, form, M. P. v. 373, 398; L. 1747; G 44.
Shape, *v.* make, devise, M. P. v. 502; ordained, M. P. xvi. 8; Shapen, *pp.* built, M. P. vii. 357; shaped, L. 2629; planned, E 275; prepared, B 249; appointed, B 253; Shapeth him, *pr. s.* intends, L. 1289; Shapen hem, *pr. pl.* dispose themselves, intend, F 214.
Shaply, *adv.* likely, T. iv. 1452.
Sharpe, *adv.* sharply, B 2073.
Shave, *pp.* shaven, bare of money, M. P. xix. 19.
Shaving, *s.* a thin slice, G 1239.
Shawe, *s.* grove, T. iii. 720.
Shedde, *pt. s.* shed, B 3447.
Sheeldes, *s. pl.* French crowns, A 278.
Shefe, *s.* sheaf, L. 2579; Sheef, A 104.
Sheld, *s.* shield, A 2122.
Shelde, *pr. s. subj.* may he shield, H. F. 88.
Shende, *v.* ruin, M. P. v. 494; destroy, H. F. 1016; Shente, *pt. s.* put to confusion, M. P. v. 255; Shent, *pp.* scolded, discomfited, spoilt, R. 2584; defeated, L. 652; Shendeth, *pr. s.* ruins, confounds, B 28.
Shendshipe, *s.* ignominy, I 273.
Shene, *adj.* bright, beautiful, M. P. v. 299; bright, fair, L. (A) 49; showy, fair, B 692; bright, F 53.
Shene, *adv.* brightly, M. P. iv. 87.
Shepne, *s. pl.* sheep-folds, A 2000.
Shere, *v.* to shear, cut, B 3257.
Shere, *s.* shear, a cutting instrument, scissors, B 3246.
Shering-hokes, *pl.* shearing-hooks, contrivances for severing ropes in a sea-fight, L. 641.
Sherte, *s.* shirt, B 2049.
Shet, *pp.* shut, A 2597.
Shete, *v.* shoot, L. 635.
Shete, *s.* sheet, G 879.
Sheter, *s. as adj.* shooter, useful for shooting, M. P. v. 180.
Shethe, *s.* sheath, L. 888; B 2066.
Shette, *pt. s.* shut, T. iii. 1086; Shet, *pp.* M. P. iii. 335; Shetten, *v.* to shut, enclose; *gonne shetten*, did enclose, G 517.
Sheves, *pl.* sheaves, H. F. 2140.
Shewen, *v.* shew, M. P. v. 168.
Shifte, *v.* to apportion, assign, G 278.
Shilde, *pr. s. subj.* forbid (lit. shield), L. 2082; Shilde, 3 *imp. s.* may he shield, may he defend, B 2098.
Shine, *s.* shin, leg, A 386.
Shined, *pt. s.* shone, L. 2194; Shynede, L. 1119; Shoon, L. 1428.
Shipman, *s.* shipman, skipper, B 1179.
Shipnes, *s. pl.* stables, D 871.
Shirreve, *s.* governor (reeve) of a shire or county, A 359.
Shiten, *pp.* befouled, A 504.
Sho, *s.* shoe, A 253.
Shod, *pp.* with something on his feet, H. F. 98.
Shode, *s.* the temple (of the head), A 2007.
Shof, *pt. s.* shoved, T. iii. 487.
Sholde, 1 *pt. s.* ought (to have done so), M. P. iii. 1200; should, B 56; *pt. s.* would, B 3627; had to, was to, G 1382; I 65; Sholdestow, shouldst thou, M. P. x. 60.
Shonde, *s.* shame, disgrace, H. F. 88; B 2098.
Shoof, *pt. s.* shoved, R. 533; pushed, M. P. v. 154; drove, L. 2412; Shove, *pp.* pushed forward, brought into notice, L. 1381.
Shoon, *pt. s.* shone, M. P. iv. 87; B 11. *Pt. t.* of *Shynen*.
Shoop, *pt. s.* shaped; *shoop me*, shaped, addressed myself, M. P. ii. 20; made, gave, L. 2569; *shoop him*, (he) got ready, L. 625; Shoop, *pt. s.* plotted, lit. shaped, B. 3543; prepared for, E 198; created, E 903; contrived, E 946.

Shortly, *adv.* to be brief, in short, M. P. iii. 830.
Shot-windowe, *s.* window with a bolt, A 3358.
Shour, *s.* onslaught, T. iv. 47; Shoures, *pl.* T. iii. 1064.
Showting, *s.* shouting, M. P. v. 693.
Showving, *s.* shoving, pushing, H 53.
Shredde, *pt. s.* shred, cut, E 227.
Shrewe, *s.* a shrew, peevish woman, E 1222, 2428; evil one, G 917; an ill-tempered (male) person, C 496; Shrewes, *pl.* wicked people, H. F. 1830; wicked men, rascals, C 835.
Shrewe, *adj.* evil, wicked, G 995.
Shrewed, *adj.* wicked, L. 1545.
Shrewed, *adv.* evil, wicked, H. F. 275.
Shrewednesse, *s.* wickedness, H. F. 1853.
Shrift, *s.* confession, M. P. iii. 1114; Shrifte, L. 745.
Shrighte, *pt. s.* shrieked, F 417.
Shryned, *pp.* enshrined, canonized (*ironically*), M. P. xxi. 15.
Shul, *pr. pl.* shall, M. P. v. 658; must, M. P. v. 80; Shullen, 2 *pr. pl.* ye shall, G 241; Shulde, 1 *pt. s.* I should, I ought to, B 247; *pt. s.* had to, M. P. iv. 251.
Shuldres, *s. pl.* shoulders, M. P. iii. 952
Shynede, *pt. s.* shone, L. 1119.
Sib, *adj.* related, akin, R. 1199.
Sicamour, *s.* sycamore, H. F. 1278.
Sicer, *s.* strong drink, B 3245.
Sighte, *s.* sight, L. 50; look, L. 1832.
Sik, *adj.* sick, A 1600.
Siker, *adj.* in security, M. P. xvii. 28; sure, H. F. 1978; secure, L. 2660; certain, G 1047; safe, G 864.
Sikered, *pp.* assured, L. 2128.
Sikerly, *adv.* surely, truly, M. P. iv. 59; certainly, H. F. 1930; certainly, assuredly, surely, B 3984.
Sikirnesse, *s.* security, surety, R. 7311; Sikernesse, security, confidence, M. P. iii. 608; x. 69; security, safety, B 425.
Sikly, *adv.* ill, with ill will, E 625.
Similitude, *s.* comparison; *hence*, proposition, statement, G 431.
Simphonye, *s.* an instrument of music, B 2005.
Sin, *conj.* since, B 56; E 448.
Singular, *adj.; for singular profyte*, for special advantage, H. F. 310.
Singularitees, *s. pl.* separate parts, particulars, Bo. V. m. iii. 51.
Singuler, *adj.* particular, Bo. II. p. vii. 70; a single, G 997.
Singulerly, *adv.* singly, Bo. IV. p. vi. 85.
Sinwes, *s. pl.* sinews, I 690.
Sir, *s.* sir, a title of respectful address; *sir* man of lawe, B 33; *sir* parish prest, B 1166; *sir* gentil maister, B 1627.
Sis cink, *i.e.* six-five or eleven, a throw with two dice, which often proved a winning one in the game of 'hazard,' B 125.
Sisoures, *pl.* scissors, H. F. 690.
Sit, *pr. s.* sits. See Sitte.
Site, *s.* site, situation, E 199.
Sith, *conj.* since, M. P. i. 77; because, M. P. iv. 125; *sith that*, since, M. P. ii. 22; since, as, L. 409; Sitthe, since, B 3867.
Sith, *adv.* then, L. 302; afterwards, C 869.
Sithen, *adv.* afterwards, M. P. i. 117; since, M. P. xxii. 51; then, next, L. 304; since, afterwards, B 58.
Sittand, *pr. pt.* fitting, R. 2263.
Sitte, *v.* to sit, M. P. iii. 451; Sitten, *ger.* M. P. iii. 449; Sit, *pr. s.* sitteth, sits, L. 816.
Sittingest, *sup. adj.* most fitting, M. P. v. 551.
Sive, *s.* sieve, G 940.
Skaffaut, *s.* scaffold, R. 4176.
Skant, *adj.* scanty, sparing, niggardly, M. P. i. 175.
Skarmish, *s.* skirmish, T. ii. 611.
Skars, *adj.* scarce, M. P. ix. 36.
Skile, *s.* reason; *gret skile*, good reason, E 1152; Skiles, *pl.* reasons, reasonings, arguments, F 205.
Skilful, *adj.* reasonable, M. P. iii. 894; L. 385; discerning, B 1038.
Skilfully, *adv.* carefully, particularly, M. P. iv. 155; reasonably, with good reason, G 320.
Skilinge, *s.* reason, Bo. IV. p. vi. 168.
Skille, *s.* reason, reasonable claim, L. 1392; Skilles, *pl.* reasons, arguments, H. F. 750.
Skippe, *v.* pass over, L. 622.
Skye, *s.* cloud, H. F. 1600.
Slake, *ger.* to slake, assuage, L. 2006; Slake of *v.* fail in, omit, L. 619; Slake, *v.* to slacken, desist from, E 705; to cease, E 137; to end, E 802; Slaketh, *pr. s.* assuages, E 1107; Slakede, *pt. s. subj.* should relax, Bo. II. m. viii. 20.
Sledes, *s. pl.* sledges, vehicles, Bo. IV. p. i. 87.
Slee, *v.* slay, M. P. iii. 351; Sleyn, *pp.* M. P. iv. 108; Slawe, *pp.* slain, B 2016; Slawen, *pp.* E 544; Slayn, *pp.* B 3708; Sleen, *v.* to slay, B 3736; *ger.* E 1076; Sleeth, *pr. s.* slays, E 628; Slow, *pt. s.* slew, B 3212; extinguished, B 3922.
Sleere, *s.* slayer, A 2005.
Sleet, *s.* sleet, L. 1220.
Sleighte, *s.* cunning, skill, L. 1382; contrivance, E 1102; craft, skill, G 867; Sleightes, *pl.* tricks, E 2421; devices, G 773.
Slen, *v.* to slay, B 3531.
Slepe, *s.* sleep, F 347; *on slepe*, asleep, L. 209.
Slepe, *ger.* to sleep, M. P. v. 94; Sleep, *pt. s.* slept, went to sleep, M. P. vii. 137; Slepen, *v.* to sleep, B 2100; Slepte, *pt. s.* slept, E 224.
Sleping, *s.* sleep, L. 1333.
Slepy, *adj.* causing sleep, A 1387.
Slewthe. See Slouthe.

Slcye, *adj.* sly, clever, T. iv. 972.

Slider, *adj.* slippery, L. 648.

Slit, *pr. s.* slideth, passeth away, M. P. v. 3. Short for *slideth*. See **Slyde**.

Slivere, *s.* sliver, part, T. iii. 1013.

Slogardye, *s.* sloth, sluggishness, G 17.

Slomrest, *pr. s.* slumberest, R. 2576.

Slough, *s.* mud, mire, H 64.

Slouthe, *s.* sloth, L. 1722; B 530.

Slow, *pt. s.* slew, M. P. iii. 727; H. F. 868; Slough, M P. vii. 56. See **Slee**.

Slowe, *s.* moth, R. 4751.

Slowh, *pt. s.* slew, Bo. IV. m. vii. 50.

Sluttish, *adj.* slovenly, G 636.

Slyde, *v.* pass, go away, E 82. See **Slit**.

Slyding, *adj.* unstable, slippery, G 732.

Slye, *adj.* cunning, crafty, M. P. vii. 48; *pl.* skilful, M. P. iii. 570; artfully contrived, F 230.

Slyk, *adj.* sleek, D 351.

Slyk, *adj.* such, A 4130.

Slyly, *adv.* prudently, wisely, A 1444.

Smal, *adj.* small; *a smal*, a little, M. P. vi. 113; little, B 1726; Smale, *adj. pl.* E 380.

Smal, *adv.* but smal = but little, F 71.

Smart, *adj.* brisk (said of a fire), G 768.

Smelde, *pt. s.* smelt, H. F. 1685.

Smert, *pr. s.* smarts, pains (me), M. P. i. 152; Smerte, *ger.* to smart, L. 502; Smerte, *v.* to smart, to feel grieved, E 353; *pt. s. subj. impers.* grieved, F 564; 1 *pr. pl. subj.* may smart, may suffer, G 871. Short for *smerteth*.

Smerte, *s.* smart, pain, pang, M. P. ii. 13; H. F. 316; smart, dolor, F 480.

Smerte, *adj. pl.* hard, bitter, painful, M. P. iii. 507.

Smerte, *adv.* smartly, sorely, E 629.

Smete, *pp.* smitten, R. 3755.

Smit, *pr. s.* smites, E 122; Smiten, *pp.* struck, M. P. iii. 1323; Smoot, *pt. s.* smote, struck, B 669. See **Smyte**.

Smok, *s.* smock, E 890.

Smoking, *pres. pt.* perfuming, A 2281.

Smoklees, *adj.* without a smock, E 875.

Smoot, *pt. s. of* Smyte.

Smoterlich, *adj.* smutty, A 3963.

Smothe, *adj.* smooth, M. P. iii. 942.

Smyte, 2 *pr. pl.* ye smite, F 137. See **Smit**.

Snewed, *pt. s.* snowed, abounded, A 345.

Snibbed, *pp.* snubbed, reproved, F 688.

Snow, *s.* snow; *i.e.* argent in heraldry, white, B 3573.

So, *conj.* if, provided that, L. 1319.

So as, as far as, as well as, M. P. iv. 161; *so have I joye*, as I hope to have bliss, M. P. iii. 1065; So as, whereas, Bo. IV. p. iii. 45.

Sobre, *adj.* sober, sedate, B 97.

Socour, *s.* succor, M. P. i. 2, 20, 42, 55; *do yow socour*, help you, M. P. iv. 292; Socours, help, L. 1341.

Sodeyn, *adj.* sudden, B 421.

Sodeynliche, *adv.* suddenly, A 1575.

Sodeynly, *adv.* suddenly, B 15.

Softe, *adv.* timidly, M. P. iii. 1212; softly, E 583; tenderly, B 275.

Softe, *adj.* gentle, slow, B 399.

Softely, *adv.* softly, F 636; quietly, G 408.

Soiour, *s.* sojourn, R. 5150.

Soiourne, *v.* sojourn, dwell, M. P. i. 160; Soiourned, *pp.* remained, M. P. iv. 78.

Soken, *s.* toll, A 3987.

Sokingly, *adv.* gently, B 2766.

Sol, Sol (the sun), G 826.

Solace, *v.* comfort, cheer, amuse, M. P. v. 297.

Solas, *s.* rest, relief, B 1972; diversion, B 1904; comfort, solace, pleasure, B 3964.

Sole, *adj.* solitary, alone, R. 2955, 3023.

Solempne, *adj.* festive, M. P. iii. 302; magnificent, illustrious, B 387; grand, festive, E 1225; superb, F 61; illustrious, F 111.

Solempnely, *adv.* with pomp, with state, B 317.

Solempnitee, *s.* feast, festivity, A 870.

Soleyn, *adj.* solitary, R. 3896; sole, solitary, M. P. iii. 982; unmated, M. P. v. 607, 614.

Som, *indef. pron.* one, M. P. iii. 305; another, M. P. v. 476; some, B 1182; one, a certain man, G 922; *som shrewe is*, some one (at least) is wicked, G 995.

Somdel, *adv.* somewhat, a little, M. P. v. 112; L. 1283; partially, lit. some deal, E 1012.

Some, *num. pron.* one; *tenthe some*, ten in all, T. ii. 1249.

Someres, *s. gen.* summer's, M. P. iii. 821; Somers, L. 142; Someres, B 554.

Somer-sesoun, *s.* spring, early summer, Bo. III. p. viii. 47.

Somer-sonne, *s.* the summer sun, M. P. v. 299.

Somme, *s.* sum, chief point, L. 1559; Sommes, *pl.* G 675.

Somne, *v.* summon, D 1377.

Somnour, *s.* an officer employed to summon delinquents to appear in ecclesiastical courts, apparitor, A 543.

Somtyme, *adv.* at some time, some day, at a future time, B 110.

Sond, *s.* sand, M. P. v. 243; B 509.

Sonde, *s.* sending, message, B 388, 1049; dispensation of providence, visitation, B 760, 826; trial, B 902; message (*or* messenger), G 595.

Sone, *s.* son, L. 1130; F 688; Sones, *pl.* F 89.

Sone, *adv.* soon, B 709.

Sone-in-law, *s.* son-in-law, E 315.

Sonest, *adv. superl.* soonest, B 3716.

Song, 1 *pt. s.* sang, M. P. iii. 1158; Songen, *pt. pl.* sang, M. P. iii. 302.

Sonken, *pp.* sunk, M. P. vii. 8.

Sonne, *s.* sun. G 52; Sonne, *gen.* sun's, B 3944.
Sonnish, *adj.* sunny, T. iv. 736.
Soor, *adj.* sore, F 1571.
Sooth, *s.* truth, B 3971; Sothe, *dat.* B 1939.
Sooth, *adj.* true; *used as adv.* truly, C 636.
Soothfastnesse, *s.* truth, E 796.
Soothly, *adv.* truly, L. 460; verily, E 689.
Soper, *s.* supper, F 290.
Sophistrye, *s.* evil cunning, L. 137.
Sophyme, *s.* a sophism, trick of logic, E 5.
Sore, *gen.* to soar, H. F. 531; soar, mount aloft, F 123.
Sore, *s.* sore, misery, E 1243.
Sore, *adv.* sorely; *bar so sore*, bore so ill, E 85.
Sort, *s.* lot, fate, oracle, T. i. 76.
Sorwe, *s.* sorrow, M. P. i. 81; sorrow, grief, sympathy, compassion, F 422.
Sorweful, *adj.* sorrowful, L. 1832.
Sorwefully, *adv.* sorrowfully, F 585.
Sorwestow, thou sorrowest, Bo. I. p. vi. 90.
Sorwful, *adj.* sorrowful, M. P. ii. 25.
Sorwing, *s.* sorrowing, sorrow, M. P. iii. 606.
Sory, *adv.* sorely, Bo. II. p. iv. 112.
Sory, *adj.* sad, unfortunate, B 1949; ill, C 876; miserable, H 55.
Sote, *adj.* sweet, A 1; F 389.
Sote, *adv.* sweetly, L. 2612.
Sotel, *adj.* subtle, cunning, M. P. xviii. 43.
Soteltee, *s.* subtlety, skill, M. P. xviii. 77; Sotelte, subtilty, cunning, L. 2546.
Soth, *adj.* true, B 169. See **Sooth**.
Sothe, *s.* truth, M. P. v. 578. See **Sooth**.
Sother, *adj. comp.* truer, G 214.
Sothfastnesse, *s.* truth, B 2365.
Soth-sawe, *s.* true tale, R. 6130, 7590.
Sotil, *adj.* subtle, cunning, L. 1556; thin, subtle, A 2030.
Sotted, *adj.* besotted, befooled, G 1341.
Souded, *pp.* attached, devoted, B 1769.
Soudiours, *s. pl.* soldiers, R. 4234.
Souked, *pp.* sucked, been at the breast, E 450; Soukinge, *pres. part.* sucking, B 1648.
Soulfre, *s.* sulphur, H. F. 1508.
Soun, *s.* sound, musical sound, H. F. 720; E 271; vaunt, L. 267.
Sound, *adj.* unhurt, L. 1619.
Sounde, *ger.* to heal, make sound, M. P. vii. 242.
Soune, *v.* sound, L. 91; imitate in sound, speak like, F 105; Souneth, *pr. s.* tends (to), is consonant (with), B 3157.
Soupen, *pr. pl.* sup, F 297.
Souple, *adj.* subtle, obedient, yielding, B 3690.
Sourden, *pres. pl.* rise from, I 448.
Soure, *adj.* bitter, cruel, Bo. I. p. iv. 99.
Soures, *s. pl.* sorrels, bucks of the third year, M. P. iii. 429.
Sours, *s.* source, M. P. iv. 174; sudden ascent, a springing aloft, H. F. 544; source, origin, E 49.
Souter, *s.* cobbler, A 3904.
Soverayn, *adj.* chief, M. P. v. 254; Sovereyn, *s.* sovereign lord, M. P. i. 69.
Sowdan, *s.* sultan, B 177.
Sowdanesse, *s.* sultaness, B 358.
Sowe, *v.* sew, fasten, T. ii. 1201.
Sowen, *v.* to sow, B 1182.
Sowled, *pp.* endued with a soul, G 329.
Sownen, *pr. pl.* sound, *i.e.* play, F 270; Sowneth, *pr. pl.* tend (to), are consonant (with), F 517; Souned, *pt. pl.* tended, B 3348; Sowninge, sounding, M. P. iii. 926. See **Soune**.
Space, *s.* opportunity, I 64.
Spak, *pt. s.* spoke, M. P. iii. 503.
Span, *pt. s.* spun, L. 1762.
Spanishing, *s.* blooming, R. 3633.
Span-newe, *adj.* newly spun, fresh, T. iii. 1665.
Sparand, *pr. pt.* sparing, R. 5363.
Spare, *v.* to refrain, abstain from, A 192.
Sparhauk, *s.* sparrow-hawk, T. iii. 1192.
Sparow, *s.* sparrow, M. P. v. 351.
Sparre, *s.* bar, bolt, A 990.
Sparred, *pt. s.* locked, R. 3320.
Sparth, *s.* halberd, battle-axe, R. 5978.
Sparwe, *s.* sparrow, A 626.
Spece, *s.* species, kind, class, I 407.
Speche, *s. dat.* speech, elocution, oratory, F 104.
Special, *adj.*; *in special*, specially, A 444.
Spede, *s.* advantage; *for comune spede*, for the good of all, M. P. v. 507.
Spede me, hasten, be quick, M. P. v. 385; Sped, *pp.* terminated, turned out, M. P. v. 101; Spedde, *pt. s.* hastened, L. 1096; prospered, made to prosper, B 3876.
Speedful, *adj.* advantageous, B 727.
Speke, *v.* speak, M. P. iii. 852; Speken, *pt. pl.* spoke, M. P. iii. 350; Spak, *pt. s.* E 295.
Spekestow, speakest thou, G 473.
Speking, *s.* speech-making, oratory, M. P. v. 488.
Spelle, *s. dat.* a spell, relation, story, B 2083.
Spence, *s.* buttery, D 1931.
Spending-silver, *s.* silver to spend, money in hand, G 1018.
Spere, *s.* spear, M. P. v. 135; *as nigh as men may casten with a spere*, a spear's cast, H. F. 1048.
Spere, *s.* sphere, orbit, M. P. iv. 137; sphere, F 1280.
Spered, *pp.* shut, R. 2099.
Sperhauke, *s.* sparrow-hawk, R. 4033.
Spete, *v.* spit, T. ii. 1617.
Spiceryе, *s.* mixture of spices, B 2043.
Spille, *v.* destroy, ruin, M. P. ii. 46; perish, M. P. vi. 121; kill, L. 1574; *ger.* to destroy, L. 1917; *doth me spille*, causes me to die, M.

P. vi. 14; Spilt, *pp.* lost, M. P. i. 180; killed, B 857; *spillestow teres*, lettest thou tears fall, Bo. I. p. iv. 4.

Spirites, *s. pl.* the (four) spirits in alchemy, G 820.

Spitously, *adv.* angrily, A 3476.

Spitten, *pt. pl.* (or *pr. pl.*) spit, L. 1433. The usual *pt. t. pl.* is *spetten*.

Spones, *pl.* spoons, C 908.

Spores, *pl.* spurs, A 473.

Sporne, *v.* spurn, kick, M. P. xiii. 11; Sporneth, *pr. s.* tramples, T. ii. 797.

Spousaille, *s.* espousal, wedding, E 180.

Spoused, *pp.* espoused, wedded, E 3, 386.

Spouted, *pp.* vomited, B 487.

Sprede, *v.* spread, open, M. P. iv. 4; Spradde, *pt. s.* covered, M. P. vii. 40; spread, E 418; Sprad, *pp.* spread, opened, M. P. iii. 874.

Spreynd, *pp.* sprinkled, B 1830. See Springen.

Springe, *v.* spring, be carried, L. 719; Sprongе, *pp.* sprung, grown, L. 1054; Springe, *v.* rise, dawn, F 346.

Springen, *v.* sprinkle, scatter, sow broadcast, B 1183; Spreynd, *pp.* sprinkled, B 1830.

Springes, *pl.* springs, merry dances, H. F. 1235.

Springing, *s.* beginning, source, E 49.

Springoldes, *s. pl.* stone-hurlers, R. 4191.

Sprongе, *pp.* sprung; *sprongе amis*, alighted in a wrong place, H. F. 2079.

Spurne, *v.* spurn, kick, F 616.

Spycerye, *s.* spices, L. 675.

Spyces, *s. pl.* spices, F 291; *pl.* spicery, L. 1110.

Squames, *s. pl.* scales, G 759.

Squaymous, *adj.* squeamish, A 3337.

Squirelles, *s. pl.* squirrels, M. P. iii. 431; Squerels, M. P. v. 196.

Squyer, *s.* squire, A 79; Squyeres, *pl.* E 192.

Squyre, *s.* measuring-square, R. 7064; Squyres, *pl.* As. i. 12, 3.

Stable, *adj.* firm, motionless, M. P. iii. 645; constant, firm, L. 703; not easily moved, L. 346; constant, E 931.

Stablissed, *pp.* established, A 2995.

Stadie, *s.* race-course, Bo. IV. p. iii. 12.

Staf-slinge, *s.* a staff-sling, B 2019.

Stak, *pt. s.* stuck, T. iii. 1372.

Stakereth, *pr. s.* staggers, L. 2687.

Stal, *pt. s.* stole, came cunningly, H. F. 418; 1 *pt. s.* went softly, L. 796.

Stalke, *v.* move stealthily, L. 1781; Stalked, 1 *pt. s.* stalked, crept quietly, M. P. iii. 458; Stalked him, *pt. s.* walked slowly, E 525.

Stamin, *s.* a kind of woollen cloth, L. 2360.

Stampe, *pr. pl.* stamp, bray in a mortar, C 538.

Stank, *s.* pool, I 841.

Stant, *pr. s.* standeth, H. F. 713; consists, M. P. xiii. 10; stands, L. 2245; is, B 3116.

Stape, Stapen, *pp.* advanced, B 4011.

Stare, *s.* starling, M. P. v. 348.

Starf, *pt. s.* died, B 283. *Pt. t.* of *Sterven*. See Sterve.

Starke, *adj. pl.* strong, H. F. 545; severe, B 3560.

Startling, *pres. pt.* moving suddenly, L. 1204.

Stature, *s.* being, existence, M. P. v. 366.

Statut, *s.* statute, ordinance, M. P. x. 43.

Staunchen, *v.* satisfy, Bo. III. m. iii. 3.

Staves, *gen.* of the shaft of a car, M. P. vii. 184.

Stede, *s.* steed, F 81.

Stede, *s.* place, H. F. 731; *in stede of*, in stead of, B 3308.

Stedfastnesse, *s.* steadfastness, firmness, E 699.

Stedfastly, *adv.* assuredly, E 1094.

Steel, *s.* steel, T. ii. 593.

Steer, *s.* a yearling bullock, A 2149.

Steked, *pp.* stuck, L. (A) 161.

Stel, *s.* steel, M. P. v. 395.

Stele, *s.* handle, A 3785.

Stele, *v.* to steal, B 105; Steleth, *pr. s.* steals away, B 21; Stal, *pt. s.* stole away, B 3763.

Stellifye, *pr. s. subj.* make into a star or constellation, L. 525.

Stemed, *pt. s.* shone, A 202.

Stente, *pt. s.* stopped, ceased, L. 1240; remained, L. 821; delayed, L. 633; Stente, *v.* to cease, stint, leave off, B 3925.

Stepe, *adj. pl.* bright, glittering, A 201.

Steppes, *pl.* footsteps, L. 829.

Stere, *s.* rudder, guide, M. P. xix. 12; steersman, guide, T. iii. 1291; rudder, T. v. 641; pilot, helmsman, B 448.

Stere, *v.* discuss, T. iv. 1451.

Stere, *v.* steer, guide, T. iii. 910; Stered, *pp.* controlled, L. 935.

Stere, *v.* stir, move, H. F. 567; Stereth, *pr. s.* stirs, H. F. 817; Stering, *pr. pt.* moving, H. F. 478.

Sterelees, *adj.* rudderless, B 439.

Steresman, *s.* steersman, H. F. 436.

Steringe, *s.* stirring, motion, H. F. 800.

Sterlinges, *pl.* sterling coins, C 907.

Sterre, *s.* star, M. P. v. 68, 300; Sterres, *gen. pl.* of the stars, E 1124.

Sterry, *adj.* starry, full of stars, M. P. v. 43.

Stert, *pr. s.* starteth, rouses, H. F. 681; Sterte, *pt. s.* started, L. 851; rushed, L. 811; leapt, L. 697; went at once, L. 660; Sterting, *pres. pt.* bursting suddenly, L. 1741; Sterte, *v.* pass away, B 335; *pr. pl.* start, rise quickly, C 705.

Sterve, *v.* die, M. P. iii. 1266; die of famine, C 451; *ger.* to die, L. 605; Starf, *pt. s.* died, B 3325.

Steven, *s.* voice, sound, M. P. iii. 307; appointment, meeting by appointment, M. P. iv. 52; Stevene, voice, language, F 150.

Stewe, *s.* closet, T. iii. 601; brothel, H. F. 26; a fish-pond, A 350.

Steyre, *s.* degree (translation of *gradus*), M. P. iv. 129; stair, T. ii. 1705.
Stiborn, *adj.* stubborn, D 456.
Stikke, *s.* stick, twig, M. P. i. 90.
Stikked, *pt. s.* stuck, fixed, L. 2202; Steked, *pp.* L. (A) 161; Stiked, *pt. s.* stuck, fixed, B 2097; Stikede, pierced, B 3897; Stiked, *pp.* stabbed, B 430; *a stiked swyn*, a stuck pig, C 556.
Stillatorie, *s.* still, vessel used in distillation, G 580.
Stille, *adv.* quietly, L. 816.
Stingeth, *pr. s.* pierces, L. 645.
Stinte, *v.* stay, stop, cause to cease, M. P. i. 63; leave off, M. P. vi. 43; 1 *pr. s.* leave off telling, H. F. 1417; Stinte, *pt. s.* stopped, was silent, M. P. iii. 1299; Stinting, *pres. pt.* stopping, M. P. iii. 1213; Stinten, *v.* stop, avert, L. 1647.
Stintinge, *s.* ceasing, end, Bo. II. m. vii. 40.
Stire, *v.* to stir, move, C 346.
Stiropes, *s. pl.* stirrups, B 1163.
Stith, *s.* anvil, A 2026.
Stok, *s.* stock, source, M. P. xiv. 1.
Stoke, *v.* stab, A 2546.
Stokked, *pp.* set in the stocks, T. iii. 380.
Stole, *pp.* stolen, L. 2154.
Stole, *s.* stool, frame for tapestry work, L. 2352.
Stonde, *v.* stand, M. P. v. 254; Stondeth, *pr. s.* M. P. ii. 64; Stoden, *pt. pl.* stood, M. P. ii. 36; Stonden, *pp.* stood, M. P. iii. 975; H. F. 1928; Stonde, *v.* stand; *fynt stonde*, finds standing, L. 1499; be understood, be fixed, E 346; be set in view (as a prize at a game), B 1931; Stode, stood, B 176.
Stongen, *pp.* stung, A 1079.
Stoon, *s.* stone, M. P. ii. 16; Stones, *pl.* precious stones, M. P. iii. 980.
Stoor, *s.* store, farm-stock, C 365.
Stopen, *pp.* advanced, E 1514.
Store, *adj.* stubborn, E 2367.
Storial, *adj.* historical, L. (A) 307; *storial sooth*, historical truth, L. 702.
Storie, *s.* tale, history, B 3900.
Stot, *s.* stallion, A 615.
Stounde, *s.* a short time, M. P. v. 142; time, hour, M. P. vii. 238; space of time, H. F. 2071; moment, L. 949; short time, B 1021.
Stoundemele, *adv.* momently, R. 2304; T. v. 674.
Stoupe, *ger.* to stoop, G 1311.
Stour, *s.* conflict, R. 1270; Stoures, *pl.* battles, combats, B 3560.
Stout, *adj.* strong, A 545.
Strake, *v.* move, proceed, M. P. iii. 1312.
Strange, *def. adj.* strange, F 89.
Strangling, *verbal s.* strangling; *of strangling*, caused by strangling, L. 807.
Straughte, *pt. s.* stretched, A 2916.
Straunge, *adj.* distant, unbending, M. P. v. 584; strange, foreign, A 13.
Straw, *interj.* a straw! F 695.
Strawen, *v.* strew, L. 207; Strawe, 2 *pr. s. subj.* strew, F 613.
Strayte, *s.* strait, B 464.
Strecche, *v.* reach, M. P. vii. 341; stretch, T. i 888. See **Streighte**.
Stree, *s.* straw, M. P. iii. 671; Stre, H. F. 363.
Streem, *s.* stream, river, A 464.
Streen, *s.* strain, *i.e.* stock, progeny, race, E 157.
Streighte, *adv.* straight, H. F. 1992.
Streighte, *pt. s.* stretched, H. F. 1373. *Pt. t.* of *Strecchen*.
Streit, *adj.* narrow, A 174.
Streite, *adv.* strictly, L. 723.
Streite, *pp. as adj. def.* drawn, B 4547.
Stremes, *pl.* streams, rays, beams, B 3944.
Strene, *s.* race, lineage, R. 4859.
Strenger, *adj. comp.* stronger, B 3711.
Strenges, *pl.* strings, T. i. 732.
Strengthes, *pl.* sources of strength, B 3248.
Strepeth, *pr. s.* strips, E 894; Strepen, *pl.* E 1116.
Strete, *s.* street, road, way, M. P. i. 70.
Streyneth, *pr. s.* constrains, L. 2684; Streyne, *v.* constrain, E 144.
Strike, *pp.* struck, M. P. xi. 35.
Strike, *s.* hank (of flax), A 676.
Strogelest, 2 *pr. s.* strugglest, C 829.
Strompetes, *s. pl.* strumpets, Bo. I. p. i. 60.
Stronde, *s.* shore, L. 2205; B 825.
Stroof, *pt. s.* strove, A 1038.
Strook, *s.* a stroke, B 3899.
Strouted, *pt. s.* spread, A 3315.
Strowe, *v.* strew, L. (A) 101.
Stroyer, *s.* destroyer, M. P. v. 360.
Stryf, *s.* quarrel, strife; *took stryf*, took up the cudgels, Bo. I. p. iv. 105.
Strykes, *pl.* strokes, As. i. 19, 2.
Stryve, *v.* to strive, oppose, E 170.
Stubbes, *s. pl.* stumps, A 1978.
Studien, *v.* to study, E 8; Studie, 2 *pr. pl.* E 5.
Studies, *pl.* endeavors, Bo. III. p. ii. 105; desires, Bo. IV. p. ii. 61.
Sturdinesse, *s.* sternness, E 700.
Sturdy, *adj.* cruel, stern, E 698, 1049.
Stye, *ger.* to mount up, Bo. IV. p. vi. 456.
Style, *s.* stile, gate to climb over, C 712; F 106.
Style, *s.* style, mode of writing, E 18, 41.
Styves, *s. pl.* stews, brothels, D 1332.
Styward, *s.* steward, B 914.
Suasioun, *s.* persuasiveness, Bo. II. p. i. 48.
Subgets, *s. pl.* subjects, E 482.
Subiecciouns, *s.* subjection, service, submission, M. P. iv. 32; subjection, obedience, B 270; subjection, governance, B 3656.

Sublymatories, *s. pl.* vessels for sublimation, G 793.
Sublymed, *pp.* sublimed, sublimated, G 774.
Sublyming, *s.* sublimation, G 770.
Submitted, *pp.* subjected, Bo. V. p. i. 49; *ye ben submitted*, ye have submitted, B 35.
Subtil, *adj.* finely woven, M. P. v. 272; skilful, L. 672.
Subtilly, *adv.* subtly, F 222.
Subtiltee, *s.* subtlety, specious reasoning, H. F. 855; skill, craft, G 844; Subtilitee, subtlety, craft, secret knowledge, G 620. See **Soteltee**.
Succedent, *s.* subordinate house in astrology, As. ii. 4, 52.
Sucred, *pp.* sugared, T. ii. 384.
Suffisaunce, *s.* sufficiency, what is sufficient, enough, a competence, M. P. x. 15; treasure, M. P. xxiii. 13; Suffisance, wealth, M. P. iii. 703.
Suffisaunt, *adj.* sufficient, capable, L. 2524; well-endowed, L. 1067; Suffisant, sufficient, L. 67; able, sufficient, B 243.
Suffraunce, *s.* endurance, patience, E 1162.
Suffraunt, *adj.* patient, tolerant, M. P. iii. 1010.
Suffren, *v.* suffer, M. P. iii. 412.
Suffyse, *v.* suffice, B 3648.
Suget, *s.* subject, R. 3535.
Suggestioun, *s.* a criminal charge, B 3607.
Sugre, *s.* sugar, B 2046.
Sukkenye, *s.* gaberdine, R. 1232.
Summitted, *pp.* submitted, Bo. III. p. x. 16; subjected, Bo. IV. p. vi. 158.
Superfluitee, *s.* superfluity, excess, C 471.
Supplien, *v.* supplicate, entreat, Bo. III. p. viii. 12.
Surcote, *s.* upper coat, A 617.
Surement, *s.* surety, pledge, F 1534.
Suretee, *s.* careless confidence, M. P. vii. 215.
Surmounted, *pp.* surpassed; *surmounted of*, surpassed in, M. P. iii. 826.
Surplys, *s.* surplice, G 558.
Surquidrie, *s.* arrogance, over-confidence, I 403.
Sursanure, *s.* surface-healed wound, F 1113.
Suspecious, *adj.* suspicious, ominous of evil, E 540.
Suspect, *adj.* suspicious, ominous of evil, E 541.
Suspect, *s.* suspicion, E 905.
Sustenance, *s.* sustenance, food, L. 2041; support, living, E 202.
Sustene, *v.* sustain, maintain, M. P. i. 22; endure, M. P. xi. 2.
Suster, *s.* sister, H. F. 1547; *her suster love*, love for her sister, L. 2365; Sustren, *pl.* H. F. 1401; Sustres, M. P. vii. 16.
Suwe, *v.* follow, T. i. 379.
Swa, *adv.* so, A 4040.
Swal, *pt. s.* swelled; *up swal*, swelled up, was puffed up with anger, B 1750; Swollen, *pp.* proud, E 950.
Swalow, *s.* swallow, M. P. v. 353.
Swalwe, *s.* swallow, T. ii. 64.
Swappe, *s.* a swoop, the striking of a bird of prey, H. F. 543.
Swappe, *v.* to swap, strike, E 586; Swapte, *pt. s.* fell suddenly, E 1099; Swap, *imp. s.* strike off, G 366.
Swartish, *adj. as adv.* darkish, dark, H. F. 1647.
Swatte, *pt. s.* sweated, G 560.
Swayn, *s.* lad, young man, B 1914.
Sweigh, *s.* sway, motion, B 296.
Swelte, *v.* die, M. P. iv. 216; Swelt, *pr. s.* dies, M. P. iv. 128; Swelte, *pt. s.* fainted, T. iii. 347.
Swelwe, *pr. s. subj.* swallow, E 1188.
Swerde, *s. dat.* sword, L. 1775; Swerd, B 64.
Swere, *v.* swear, B 1171; Swoor, *pt. s.* B 2062; Sworen, *pl.* E 176; Swore, *pp.* sworn, E 403; Sworn, bound by oath, F 18.
Swering, *s.* swearing, C 631.
Swete, *adj.* sweet, H 42.
Swete, *ger.* to sweat, G 522; Swatte, *pt. s.* G 560.
Swety, *adj.* sweaty, M. P. ix. 28.
Sweven, *s.* dream, M. P. iii. 119; B 3930; Swevenes, *pl.* H. F. 3.
Sweynte, *pp.* tired out, slothful, H. F. 1783. *Pp.* of *Swenchen*.
Swich, *adj.* such, M. P. i. 116; B 43; such a thing, M. P. v. 570; *swich a*, such a, B 3921; *swich oon*, such an one, F 231; Swiche, *pl.* B 88.
Swink, *s.* labor, toil, A 188; G 730.
Swinke, *v.* labor, toil, A 186; G 669; *ger.* labor, toil, C 874; *pr. pl.* gain by labor, work for, G 21; Swonken, *pp.* toiled, A 4235.
Swinker, *s.* laborer, A 531.
Swire, *s.* throat, R. 325.
Swogh, *s.* soughing noise, murmur, M. P. v. 247; H. F. 1031; swoon, M. P. ii. 16; Swough, whizzing noise, H. F. 1941; Swow, swoon, *hence* deep sorrow, M. P. iii. 215.
Swollen, *pp.* swollen, *i.e.* proud, E 950.
Swolow, *s.* gulf, L. 1104.
Swolwe, *v.* to swallow, H 36.
Swommen, *pt. pl.* swam, were filled with swimming things, M. P. v. 188.
Swonken. See **Swinke**.
Swoor, *pt. s.* swore, M. P. vii. 101.
Swoot, *s.* sweat, G 578.
Swote, *adj.* sweet, M. P. v. 296. See **Sote**, Swete.
Swough, *s.* fainting-fit, swoon, L. 1816. See **Swogh**.
Swoune, *v.* swoon, faint, M. P. iv. 216; Swowneth, *pr. s.* M. P. vii. 169.
Swow. See **Swogh**.
Swowneth, *pr. s.* swoons, F 430; Swowned,

pt. s. swooned, F 443; Swowning, *pres. part.* B 1815.

Swowninge, *s.* swooning, swoon, E 1080.

Swyn, *s.* swine, A 598.

Swythe, *adv.* quickly, H. F. 538; *as swythe*, as quickly as possible, B 637; G 936.

Swyve, *v.* have sexual intercourse with, A 4178.

Sy, *pt. s.* saw, G 1381.

Sye, *v.* sink, T. v. 182.

Sye, Seyen, *pt. pl.* saw, E 1804; G 110.

Syk, *s.* sigh, F 498.

Syke, 1 *pr. s.* sigh, M. P. xxii. 10; Syked, *pt. s.* sighed, B 3394; Syketh, *pr. s.* sigheth, sighs, B 985; Sighte, *pt. s.* sighed, B 1035.

Sykliche, *adj.* sickly, T. ii. 1528.

Syre, *s.* sire, master, M. P. v. 12.

Sys, six, B 3851.

Sythe, *pl.* times, B 733; *ofte sythe*, many times, G 1031; *ful ofte sythe*, full oftentimes, E 233.

Sythe, *s.* scythe, L. 646.

T.

T', before a verb beginning with a vowel, to; *as* Tacord, etc.

Taa, *v.* take, A 4129.

Tabard, *s.* short coat for a herald, A 20; for a laborer, A 541.

Tabernacles, *pl.* tabernacles, shrines, H. F. 123, 1190.

Table, *s.* board; *at table*, at board, *i.e.* entertained as a lodger, G 1015; Tables, *pl.* draughts, M. P. iii. 51.

Tabouren, *pr. pl.* drum, din, L. 354.

Tabyde, *for* To abide, B 797.

Taccepte, *for* To accept, M. P. xxiii. 16.

Tache, *s.* defect, M. P. xxi. 18. See **Tecches**.

Tacheve, *for* To acheve, to achieve, L. 2111.

Tacord, *for* To accord, *i.e.* to agreement, H 98.

Tacorde, *for* To acorde, to agree, M. P. i. 27.

Taffata, *s.* fine silk, A 440.

Taffraye, *for* To affraye, to frighten, E 455.

Taillages, *s. pl.* taxes, I 567.

Taille, *s.* a tally, credit, A 570.

Tak, *imp. s.* take; *tak kepe*, take heed, M. P. v. 563; Tak (she), let (her) take, M. P. v. 462; Taketh, *imp. pl.* take, M. P. iv. 9; Take, *pp.* brought, M. P. i. 20; Took, 1 *pt. s.* drew in, breathed in, Bo. I. p. iii. 3; Take, *v.* present, offer, L. 1135; Tak, *imp. s.* receive, B 1117; Take me, 1 *pr. s.* offer myself, betake myself, B 1985; Takestow, 2 *pr. s.* takest thou, G 435.

Takel, *s.* tackle, arrow, A 106.

Tale, *s.* tale; *I gan finde a tale to him*, I thought of something to say to him, M. P. iii. 536; a long story, E 383; Tales, *pl.* B 130.

Tale, *v.* talk, tell stories, T. iii. 231.

Talent, *s.* longing, Bo. II. p. i. 13; inclination, L. 1771; desire, appetite, C 540.

Talighte, *for* To alighte, *i.e.* to alight, E 909.

Taling, *s.* story-telling, B 1624.

Talle, *adj.* docile, obsequious, M. P. iv. 38.

Tamen, *v.* make trial of, R. 3904.

Tamende, *for* To amende, to redress, E 441.

Tan, *pp.* taken, R. 5894.

Tanoyen, *for* To anoyen, to injure, B 492.

Tapicer, *s.* upholsterer, A 362.

Tapinage, *s.* hiding; *in tapinage*, incognito, R. 7363.

Tapite, *v.* cover with tapestry, M. P. iii. 260.

Tappestere, *s.* barmaid, tapster, A 241.

Targe, *s.* target, shield, defence, M. P. i. 176; shield, M. P. vii. 33.

Tarien, *v.* tarry, B 983; delay (used actively), F 73; Taried, *pp.* delayed, F 402.

Tarraye, *for* To arraye, to array, arrange, E 961.

Tartre, *s.* tartar, G 813.

Tas, *s.* heap, A 1005.

Tassaile, *for* To assaile, *ger.* to assail, M. P. ix. 40; Tassaille, E 1180.

Tassaye, *for* To assaye, to try, M. P. iii. 346; to test, prove, try, E 454, 1075.

Tassoille, *for* To assoile, to absolve, C 933.

Tast, *s.* taste, relish for, M. P. v. 160.

Taste, *v.* try, test, L. 1993; *imp. s.* feel, G 503.

Tatarwagges, *s. pl.* tatters, R. 7259.

Taverner, *s.* inn-keeper, C 685.

Tavyse, *for* To avyse, to deliberate, B 1426.

Tawayte, *i.e.* to wait, M. P. xxiii. 7.

Taylage, *s.* taxation, M. P. ix. 54. Lit. 'taking by tally.'

Taylagiers, *s. pl.* tax-gatherers, R. 6811.

Tecches, *s. pl.* ill qualities, R. 6517; T. iii. 935; characteristics, H. F. 1778. See **Tache**.

Teche, *v.* teach, A 308; B 1180.

Teer, *s.* a tear, E 1104; Teres, *pl.* E 1084.

Telle, *v.* tell, compute, M. P. iii. 440; 1 *pr. s.* Telle (no tale), account (nothing), reckon (of no importance), M. P. v. 326; Telleth, *imp. pl.* tell, M. P. iii. 555; Tellen, *v.* tell, relate, B 56; Tel, *imp. s.* B 1167.

Tembrace, *for* To embrace, E 1101.

Temen, *v.* bring; *temen us on here*, bring us on our bier, let us die, H. F. 1744.

Tempest thee, *imp. s.* violently distress thyself, M. P. xiii. 8; 2 *pr. s. subj.* vex, perturb, Bo. II. p. iv. 85.

Temple, *s.* inn of court, A 567.

Tempred, *pt. s.* tempered, M. P. v. 214; Temprede, *pt. s.* modulated, Bo. III. m. xii. 25; Tempred, *pp.* tempered, G 926.

Temprure, *s.* tempering, R. 4177.

Temps, *s.* tense; *futur temps*, future tense. futurity, time to come, G 875.

Ten so wood, ten times as mad, L. 736.
Tenbrace, *for* To embrace, to embrace, B 1891.
Tendure, *v.* to endure, E 756, 811.
Tendyte, *for* To endyte, to compose, write, M. P. v. 167; L. (A) 310; to relate, L. 1345.
Tene, *s.* sorrow, grief, H. F. 387; vexation, M. P. i. 3; sorrow, T. i. 874.
Tenour, *s.* outline of the story, L. 929.
Tenquere, *for* To enquere, to ask, M. P. i. 113.
Tenspyre, *for* To enspyre, *i.e.* to inspire, G 1470.
Tente, *s.* tent, M. P. i. 9, 41.
Tentifly, *adv.* attentively, E 334.
Tercel, *adj.* male (of an eagle), M. P. v. 393; *as s.* male eagle, M. P. v. 405.
Tercelet, *s.* male falcon, M. P. v. 529; F 504, 621; Tercelets, *pl.* male birds of prey, M. P. v. 659; F 648.
Tere, *s.* a tear, B 3852.
Terins, *s.* tarins, R. 665.
Terme, *s.* period, space of time, M. P. iii. 79; appointed time, H. F. 392; *in terme*, in set terms or phrases, C 311; *terme of his lyve*, for the whole period of his life, G 1479; Termes, *pl.* set terms, pedantic expressions, G 1398.
Terme-day, *s.* appointed day, M. P. iii. 730.
Termyne, *v.* express in 'good set terms,' M. P. v. 530.
Terved, *pp.* stripped, G 1171.
Tery, *adj.* tearful, T. iv. 821.
Tescape, *for* To escape, M. P. xviii. 50.
Tespye, *for* To espye, to espy, B 1989.
Testers, *s. pl.* head-pieces, A 2499.
Testes, *s. pl.* vessels for assaying metals, G 818.
Testif, *adj.* headstrong, A 4004.
Texpounden, *for* To expounden, *i.e.* to expound, to explain, B 1716.
Text, *s.* text, quotation from an author, B 45.
Textuel, *adj.* literal, keeping strictly to the letter of the text, I 57.
Teyd, *pp.* tied, bound, E 2432.
Teyne, *s.* a thin plate of metal, G 1225, 1229.
Th', before substantives beginning with a vowel, the; *as* Theffect *for* the effect.
Thadversitee, *s.* the adversity, E 756.
Thakked, *pp.* stroked, A 3304.
Thalighte, *for* Thee alighte; *in thee alighte*, alighted in thee, B 1660.
Thalmyghty, *for* The Almighty, M. P. v. 379.
Thamendes, *for* The amendes, the amends, M. P. iii. 526.
Thanke, 1 *pr. s.* I thank, E 1088.
Thanne, *adv.* then, M. P. iii. 1191; Than, M. P. i. 118; next, M. P. v. 324; *er than*, sooner than, before, G 899.
Thapocalips, *for* The Apocalypse, H. F. 1385.
Thar, *pr. s. impers.* need; *him thar*, it is needful for him, M. P. i. 76.
Tharivaile, *for* The arivaile, the arrival, the landing, H. F. 451.
Tharmes, *for* The armes, the arms, armorial bearings, H. F. 1411.
Tharray, *for* The array, F 63.
Thassay, *for* The assay, the endeavor, M. P. v. 2.
That, introducing an optative clause, T. v. 944.
That, *rel.* that which, M. P. iii. 635; which, M. P. iii. 979; *conj.* so that, M. P. iii. 566; as that, M. P. iii. 959; *that other*, the other, M. P. iii. 634; *that oon, that other*, the one, the other, M. P. iii. 1290; That, *conj.* when, T. ii. 910; as, as well as, B 1036; *rel. pron.* with reference to whom, G 236.
Thavision, *for* The avision, the vision, M. P. iii. 285.
Thavys, the advice, A 3076.
The, *as in The bet*, by so much the better, M. P. iii. 668; *The las*, by so much the less, M. P. iii. 675.
The, *pron.* thee, F 676.
Thee, *v.* prosper, thrive, M. P. iv. 267; G 641; *also mote I thee*, so may I thrive, B 2007.
Theef, *s.* false wretch, M. P. vii. 161.
Theefly, *adv.* like a thief, L. 1781.
Theffect, *for* The effect, the consequence, result, H. F. 5; the matter, contents, M. P. ii. 56; the substance, pith, L. 1180; the moral, B 2148.
Thegle, *for* The egle, the eagle, B 3573.
Theme, *s.* text, thesis of a sermon, C 333.
Themperour, *for* The emperour, the emperor, B 248; Themperoures, the emperor's, B 151.
Then, *conj.* than, M. P. iv. 235; L. 1673.
Thencens, *for* The encens, the incense, L. 2612.
Thenche, *v.* think, A 3253.
Thende, *for* The ende, the end, B 423, 3269.
Thengendring, *for* The engendring, the process of production, H. F. 968.
Thengyne, *for* The engyne, the (warlike) engine, H. F. 1934.
Thenken, *ger.* to think, M. P. iii. 100; Thenketh, *pr. s.* M. P. vii. 105; Thenke, 1 *pr. s.* I think, I intend, E 641.
Thennes, *adv.* thence, B 308; *used as s.* the place that, G 66.
Thennes-forth, *adv.* thenceforth, B 1755.
Thentencioun, the intention, G 1443.
Thentente, *for* The entente, purpose, end, G 1306.
Thenvyous, *for* The envyous, the spiteful, malicious, M. P. iii. 642.
Theorik, *s.* theory, As. Prol. iv. 109.
Ther, *adv.* where, M. P. i. 145; whereas, M. P. i. 119; there, B 62; where, T. ii. 618; *ther as*, where that, L. (A) 28; when that, L. 1277; where, M. P. iii. 197; *ther that*, where, F 267.
Ther, introducing an optative clause, T. iii. 947.

Ther-aboute, *adv.* concerned with that matter, H. F. 597; thereupon, therein, G 832.

Therbe, *for* The erbe, the herb, H. F. 290.

Ther-bifore, *adv.* beforehand, E 689, 729.

Ther-biforn, *adv.* beforehand, before the event, B 197; C 624.

Ther-fore, *adv.* on that account, E 445; on that point, E 1141; for that purpose, F 177; for it, L. 1391.

Ther-geyn, there against, R. 6555.

Ther-inne, *adv.* therein, in it, B 1945, 3573.

Therof, *adv.* concerning that, M. P. iii. 1132; from that, M. P. iii. 1166; Ther-of, with respect to that, to that end, E 644.

Ther-on, *adv.* thereupon, thereof, F 3.

Ther-oute, *adv.* out there, out in the open air, B 3362; outside there, G 1136.

Therthe, *for* The erthe, the earth, M. P. v. 80.

Therto, *adv.* besides, moreover, F 19.

Ther-whyle, *adv.* for that time, M. P. i. 54; Ther-whyles, whilst, Bo. V. p. vi. 281.

Therwith, *adv.* withal, for all that, M. P. iii. 954; besides, at the same time, B 3210.

Therwith-al, *adv.* at that, therewith, M. P. v. 405; thereat, L. 864; besides, L. 1175; besides all that, as well, B 3131, 3612.

Theschewing, *for* The eschewing, the avoiding (of anything), M. P. v. 140.

Thestaat, *for* The estaat, the state, condition, B 128.

Theves, *s. pl.* robbers (lit. thieves), M. P. i. 15.

Thewed, *pp.*; *wel thewed*, of good thews, or habits, of good disposition, M. P. iv. 180.

Thewes, *pl.* habits, morals, H. F. 1834; natural qualities, L. 2577; qualities, E 409; virtues, good qualities, G 101.

Thexcellent, the excellent, B 150.

Thexecucion, *for* The execucion, the execution, M. P. x. 65.

Thider, *adv.* thither, B 144; C 749.

Thikke, *adj.* thick, F 159.

Thilke, that, M. P. iii. 785; that very, that same, C 753; that sort of, I 50.

Thimage, the image, L. 1760; B 1695.

Thing, *pl.* things, L. 11, 2140; possessions, G 540; Thinges, poems, L. 364; pieces of music, F 78.

Thingot, the ingot, G 1233.

Thinke, *v.* seem, T. i. 405; Thinketh, *pr. s. impers.*; *me thinketh*, it seems to me, B 1901; seems, L. 247; Thoughte, *pt. s. impers.* it seemed, L. 134; Thoghte, L. 1697.

Thinne, *adj.* thin, poor, scanty, limited, G 741.

Thirleth, *pr. s.* pierces, M. P. vii. 211; Thirled, *pp.* M. P. vii. 350.

This, *for* This is, T. ii. 363; Thise, *pl.* these, M. P. iii. 817; Thise, *pl. of* This, *but a monosyllable*, B 59.

Tho, those, M. P. iii. 914; L. 153, 1575.

Tho, *adv.* still, M. P. iii. 1054; then, L. 210.

Thoccident, *for* The Occident, B 3864.

Thogh, *adv.* though, M. P. iv. 200; yet, M. P. iii. 670.

Thoght, *s.* care, anxiety, B 1779; E 80.

Thoghte, *1 pt. s.* thought, M. P. iii. 448.

Tholed, *pp.* suffered, D 1546.

Thombe, *s.* thumb, F 83, 148.

Thonder, *s.* thunder, F 258.

Thonder-leit, *s.* thunder-bolt, Bo. I. m. iv. 13.

Thonke, *1 pr. s.* I thank, E 830.

Thorgh, *prep.* through, M. P. v. 127, 129.

Thorient, *for* The Orient, B 3871, 3883.

Thoriginal, *for* The original, L. 1588.

Thorpes, *pl.* villages, M. P. v. 350.

Thorugh-passen, *pr. pl.* penetrate, Bo. IV. m. iii. 55.

Thought, *s.* anxiety, R. 308.

Thoughte, *pt. s. impers.* seemed, B 146; *thoughte hem*, it seemed to them, C 476; Thoghte, M. P. iii. 535.

Thral, *s.* thrall, slave, servant, B 3343.

Thraldom, *s.* bondage, slavery, B 286.

Thraste, *pt. s.* thrust, T. ii. 1155.

Threde, *s.* thread, M. P. v. 267.

Threed, *s.* thread, L. 2018.

Threpe, *1 pr. pl.* we call, assert to be, G 826.

Threshfold, *s.* threshold, E 288, 291.

Threste, *v.* thrust, A 2612.

Threte, *v.* threaten, L. 754.

Threting, *s.* threatening, menace, G 698.

Thridde, third, H. F. 308.

Thrift, *s.* success, prosperity in money-making, G 739, 1425.

Thrifty, *adj.* profitable, B 1165.

Thringe, *v.* thrust, T. iv. 66.

Thrittene, thirteen, D 2259.

Throf, *pt. s.* flourished, Bo. III. m. iv. 5. *Pt. s.* of *Thryve*.

Throng, *pt. s.* pressed, forced his way, M. P. vii. 55. *Pt. t.* of *Thringen*.

Throp, *s.* thorpe, small village, E 199; Thropes, *s. gen.* village's, I 12.

Throstel, *s.* throstle, song-thrush, M. P. v. 364.

Throte, *s.* throat, M. P. iii. 945.

Throwe, *s.* a short space of time, a little while, B 953; E 450.

Throwe, *pp.* thrown, L. 1960.

Throwes, *s. pl.* throes, T. v. 206, 1201.

Thrust, *s.* thirst, R. 4722.

Thrustel, *s.* a throstle, thrush, B 1963; Thrustelcok, B 1959.

Thrusteth, *pr. s.* thirsts, yearns, L. 103.

Thrye, thrice, T. ii. 89.

Thryve, *v.* thrive, prosper, E 172.

Thryvinge, *adj.* vigorous, Bo. V. m. iv. 26.

Thundringe, *s.* thundering, thunder, H. F. 1040.

Thunworthiest, the unworthiest, M. P. xxii. 19.
Thurfte, *pt. s.* needed, T. iii. 572.
Thurgh, *prep.* through, M. P. i. 27, 32; through, by help of, B 1669; by, F 11.
Thurgh-girt, *pp.* pierced through, A 1010.
Thurghout, *prep.* throughout, F 46; all through, B 256, 464; quite through, C 655.
Thurrok, *s.* hold of a ship, sink, I 363, 715.
Thurst, *s.* thirst, B 100.
Thursted him, *pt. s. impers.* he was thirsty, B 3229.
Thwitel, *s.* knife, A 3933.
Thwyte, *pr. pl.* whittle, cut up for, H. F. 1938; Thwiten, *pp.* whittle, R. 933.
Tid, *pp.* happened, H. F. 255. *Pp.* of *Tyden.* See **Tydeth**.
Tidifs, *s. pl.* small birds, F 648.
Tikel, *adj.* frail, A 3428.
Tikelnesse, *s.* lack of steadiness, instability, M. P. xiii. 3.
Til, *conj.* until, till, M. P. iv. 59.
Til, *prep.* to, G 306.
Tilier, *s.* tiller, R. 4339.
Tilyere, *s.* tiller, Bo. V. p. i. 97.
Timbres, *s. pl.* timbrels, R. 772.
Tipet, *s.* tippet, H. F. 1841.
Tirannye, *s.* tyranny, B 165.
Tirannts, *pl.* tyrants, L. 374.
Tit, *pr. s.* betides, T. i. 333.
Titering, *s.* hesitating, T. ii. 1744.
Title, *s.* pretext, T. i. 488.
To, *adv.* too, B 2129; overmuch, G 1423; *to dere*, too dearly, C 293; *to and fro*, all ways, H 53.
To, *prep.* for, M. P. i. 184; *him to*, for him, M. P. iii. 771; to (used after its case), G 1449.
To, *s.* toe, A 2726.
To-bete, *v.* beat severely, G 405.
To-breketh, *pr. s.* is violently broken, H. F. 779; breaks in twain, G 907; To-broken, *pp.* broken through, destroyed, M. P. xvi. 1.
To-breste, *pr. s. subj.* may be broken in twain, M. P. i. 16.
Tode, *s.* toad, I 636.
To-drawen, *pr. pl.* allure, Bo. IV. m. iii. 52; To-drowen, *pt. pl.* tore in pieces, Bo. I. p. iii. 47; To-drawen, *pp.* distracted, Bo. I. p. v. 84.
To-driven, *pp.* scattered, L. 1280.
To-forn, *adv.* in front, beforehand, Bo. V. p. vi. 337.
To-forn, *prep.* before, T. iii. 335.
Togedres, *adv.* together, M. P. iii. 809.
Toght, *adj.* taut, D 2267.
To-gider, *adv.* together, L. 649; B 3222; Togidres, C 702.
To-go, *pp.* dispersed, L. 653.
To-hangen, *v.* hang thoroughly, put to death by hanging, H. F. 1782.
To-hepe, *adv.* together, L. 2009.
To-hewe, *pp.* hewn in pieces, B 430.
Toke, 2 *pt. s.* tookest, M. P. iii. 483.
Tokening, *s.* token, proof, G 1153.
Tolde, 1 *pt. s.* counted, H. F. 1380. *Pt. t.* of *Tellen*.
Tolis, *s. pl.* tools, T. i. 632.
Tollen, *v.* take toll, A 562.
Tollen, *v.* attract, entice, Bo. II. p. vii. 20.
Tombesteres, *s. pl. fem.* dancing girls, lit. female tumblers, C 477.
Tomblinge, *pr. pt. as adj.* fleeting, transitory, Bo. II. m. iii. 26.
To medes, as reward, T. ii. 1201.
Ton, The ton, that one, R. 5217.
Tong, *s.* tongue, L. 2334; Tonge, *dat.* L. 1675.
Tonge, *s.* tongue, M. P. iii. 930; Tonges, *pl.* languages, B 3497. See **Tunge**.
Tonged, *pp.* tongued, M. P. iii. 927.
Tonne, *s.* tun, cask, wine-cask, L. 195.
Tonne-greet, *adj.* great as a tun, A 1994.
Took, *pt. s.* handed over, gave, M. P. iii. 48; took, had, B 192.
Toon, *pl.* toes, claws, H. F. 2028.
Top and tail, beginning and end, H. F. 880.
To poynte, *adv.* point by point, T. iii. 497; apoynte, exactly, T. v. 1620
To-race, *pr. pl. subj.* may scratch to pieces, E 572.
Tord, *s.* excrement, C 955.
To-rent, *pp.* torn in pieces, M. P. v. 432; Torente, *pt. s.* tore in pieces, L. 820; tore violently, L. 2188; rent in twain, B 3215; To-rent, *pp.* torn to pieces, E 1012.
Torets, *pl.* small rings or swivels, A 2152.
Tormentinge, *s.* torture, E 1038.
Tormentour, *s.* tormentor, *i.e.* executioner, B 818.
Tormentyse, *s.* torment, B 3707.
Torn, *s.* turn, C 815.
Torne, *v.* to turn, G 1403; Terve, 3 *imp. s.* may he turn, G 1274; Terved, *pp.* turned, *i.e.* 'turned him round his finger,' G 1171.
Torney, *s.* tournament, T. iv. 1669.
To-romblen, *v.* rumble, crash, L. 1218.
Tortuous, *adj.* oblique, a technical term in astrology, used of the six of the zodiacal signs which ascend most obliquely, B 302.
To-shake, *pp.* shaken to pieces, L. 962; tossed about, L. 1765.
To-shivered, *pp.* broken to pieces, been destroyed, M. P. v. 493.
To-slitered, *pp.* slashed, R. 840.
To-swinke, *pr. pl.* labor greatly, C 519.
To-tar, *pt. s.* lacerated, B 3801.
Totelere, *subst. as adj.* tattling, tale-bearing, L. 353.
To-tere, *pr. pl.* rend, tear in pieces, C 474; Totore, *pp.* torn in pieces, G 635; To-torn, M. P. v. 110.

Tother, *the tother* (*for* that other), the other, L. (A) 325.

Toty, *adj.* dizzy, A 4253.

Touche, 1 *pr. s.* touch on, slightly indicate, M. P. v. 285; *pr. s. subj.* affect, concern, B 3284.

Tough, *adj.* hard, harsh, M. P. iii. 531.

Toumbling, *adj.* perishing, Bo. III. p. ix. 194. See Tomblinge.

Tour, *s.* tower, M. P. i. 154; mansion (in astrology), M. P. iv. 113; in B 2096, it means that his crest was a miniature tower, with a lily projecting from it.

Touret, *s.* turret, A 1909.

Tourneyment, *s.* a tournament, B 1906.

Toute, *s.* backside, A 3812.

Toverbyde, to outlive, D 1260.

Towayle, *s.* towel, R. 161; Towaille, B 3935, 3943.

To-wonde, *pt. s.* gave way, became broken, M. P. iv. 102.

To-yere, *adv.* this year, T. iii. 241.

Traas, *s.* trace, procession, L. 285.

Trace, 1 *pr. s.* trace out, follow, go, M. P. v. 54.

Trad, *pt. s.* trod, B 4368.

Tragedien, *s.* writer of tragedy, Bo. III. p. vi. 3.

Traiterye, *s.* treachery, H. F. 1812; traitorye, B 781.

Traitour, *s.* traitor, H. F. 267; Traytour, M. P. iii. 1120.

Transmutacioun, *s.* change, M. P. x. 1.

Transmuwen, *v.* transmute, T. iv. 467.

Transporten, *v.* extend, Bo. I. p. iv. 268.

Trappe, *s.* trap, snare, M. P. xvii. 24.

Trappures, *pl.* trappings of a horse, A 2499.

Traunce, *v.* tramp, T. iii. 690.

Travaile, *s.* 'labor and sorrow,' M. P. iii. 602; Travayle, work, motion, M. P. x. 70.

Trave, *s.* frame for unruly horses, A 3282.

Travers, *s.* curtain, screen, T. iii. 674.

Trayed, *pt. s.* betrayed, H. F. 390; L. 2486.

Trays, *s. pl.* traces, T. i. 222.

Trayteresse, *s. fem.* traitress, M. P. iii. 620.

Traytor, *s.* go-between, pimp, T. iii. 273.

Trecherye, *s.* treachery, trickery, M. P. v. 347.

Trechour, *s.* traitor, R. 6602.

Trede-foul, *s.* treader of fowls, B 3135.

Treget, *s.* deceit, R. 6267.

Tregetour, *s.* a juggler who used mechanical contrivances, H. F. 1277.

Trench, *s.* a hollow walk, alley, F 392.

Trenden, *v.* revolve, Bo. III. m. xi. 4.

Trentals, *s.* series of masses for the dead, D 1717.

Trepeget, *s.* engine for casting stones, R. 6279.

Tresor, *s.* treasure, wealth, L. 1652; Tresore, M. P. iii. 854; Tresour, B 3401.

Tresorere, *s.* treasurer, M. P. i. 107.

Tresorie, *s.* treasury, H. F. 524.

Trespace, *v.* trespass, transgress, sin, B 3370.

Trespas, *s.* trespass, fault, M. P. iv. 49.

Tressour, *s.* head-dress, R. 568.

Tretable, *adj.* tractable, inclinable, M. P. iii. 923; inclined to talk, M. P. iii. 533; manageable, yielding, L. 411.

Trete, *v.* treat of, tell, M. P. v. 34; treat, write, L. 575; *pp.* explained, Bo. V. p. i. 3; *pr. pl.* discourse, treat, C 630.

Tretee, *s.* treaty, B 3865.

Tretis, *s.* treatise, document, T. ii. 1697; B 2147.

Tretys, *adj.* long, well-proportioned, A 152.

Trewe, *adj.* true, M. P. iii. 1287; *pl. used as s.* the faithful, B 456.

Trewe, *s.* truce, T. iii. 1779.

Treweliche, *adv.* truly, E 804.

Trewe love, *s.* condiment to sweeten breath, A 3692.

Trewely, *adv.* truly, certainly, L. 317.

Triacle, *s.* a sovereign remedy, B 479.

Trichour, *s.* traitor, R. 6308.

Trille, *v.* turn, F 316.

Trippe, *v.* to trip, to move briskly with the feet, F 312.

Trist, *s.* trust, T. iii. 403.

Triste, *s.* tryst, T. ii. 1534.

Triste, *ger.* to trust, trust to, L. 1885; *v.* trust, L. 333; Tristed, *pp.* trusted, R. 3929.

Troden, *pp.* stepped, C 712.

Trompe, *s.* trumpet, L. 635; B 705.

Trompes, *gen. s.* trumpet's, M. P. v. 344.

Trompes, *pl.* trumpeters, M. P. vii. 30.

Tronchoun, *s.* broken shaft of a spear, A 2615.

Trone, *s.* throne, H. F. 1384; throne (of God), heaven, C 842.

Troublable, *adj.* disturbing, Bo. IV. m. ii. 12.

Trouble, *adj.* tempestuous, turbid, Bo. I. m. vii. 3; troubled, gloomy, E 465.

Troubly, *adj.* cloudy, obscure, Bo. IV. m. v. 40.

Trouthe, *s.* truth, G. 238; truth, fidelity, L. 267; troth, truth, B 527.

Trowandyse, *s.* vagrancy, R. 3954.

Trowe, 1 *pr. s.* believe, think, suppose, M. P. iii. 1042; Trowest, 2 *pr. s.* M. P. iii. 651; Trowen, *pr. pl.* believe (in), give trust (to), L. (A) 21; Trowestow, dost thou think, Bo. I. p. iii. 27.

Truaunding, *s.* vagrancy, R. 6721.

Trufles, *s. pl.* trifles, I 715.

Trumpen, *v.* blow the trumpet, H. F. 1243; Trumpe, H. F. 1629.

Tryce, *v.* pull away, B 3715.

Trye, *adj.* choice, excellent, B 2046.

Tryne compas, the threefold world, containing earth, sea, and heaven, G 45.

Tuel, *s.* pipe, slender chimney, H. F. 1649.

Tulle, *v.* lure, A 4134.

Tunge, *s.* tongue, M. P. i. 128.

Turmente, *v.* torment, L. 1165.

Turmentrye, *s.* torture, R. 4740.
Turned, *pp.* turned, at an end, M. P. iii. 689.
Turtel, *s.* turtle-dove, M. P. *v.* 355.
Turves, *s. pl.* pieces of turf, turf-plots, L. 204.
Twelf, twelve, E 736
Twelfte, *adj.* twelfth, M. P. iv. 139.
Tweye, two, M. P. i. 104; Tweyne, twain, M. P. ii. 76.
Tweyfold, *adj.* twofold, double, G 566.
Twigges, *pl.* twigs, H. F. 1936.
Twighte, *pt. s.* twitched, pulled, T. iv. 1185.
Twinkeling, *s.* twinkling, opening and shutting (of the eye), M. P. iv. 222; Twinkling, momentary blinking, E 37.
Twinkled, *pp.* winked, Bo. II. p. iii. 86.
Twinne, *v.* part, L. 2032; *twinne from his wit*, lose his mind, M. P. vii. 102; *ger.* to separate, B 517; to depart (from), C 430.
Twist, *pp.* twisted, H. F. 775; Twiste, *v.* to twist, wring, torment, F 566.
Twiste, *s.* (*dat.*) twig, spray, F 442.
Twyes, *adv.* twice, B 1738.
Twyne, *s.* twine, L. 2016.
Tyde, *s.* time, M. P. v. 97; *on a tyde*, upon a time, M. P. iv. 51; time, L. (A) 304; season, F 142.
Tyden, *v.* befall, B 337; Tydeth, *pr. s.* betides, happens, M. P. iv. 202.
Tydif, *s.* small bird; perhaps a wren, L. 154.
Tyding, *s.* tidings, news, B 726.
Tygres, *pl. gen.* tigers', H. F. 1459.
Tyles, *s. pl.* tiles, M. P. iii. 300; tiles, bricks, L. 709.
Tyme, *s.* time, B 19.
Tyren, *v.* tear, rend, Bo. III. m. xii. 54; *pr. pl.* feed on, T. i. 787.

U.

Umbreyde, *pt. s.* upbraided, reproached, L. 1671.
Unable, *adj.* wanting in ability, M. P. xv. 10.
Unagreable, *adj.* miserable, Bo. I. m. i. 36.
Unbityde, *v.* fail to happen, Bo. V. p. iv. 44.
Unbokele, *v.* unbuckle, F 555.
Unbounden, *pp.* unbound, unwedded, divorced, E 1226.
Unbrent, *pp.* unburnt, B 1658.
Unconning, *adj.* unskilful, M. P. vi. 75.
Uncouple, *v.* to let loose, B 3692.
Uncouthe, *adj. pl.* strange, F 284.
Uncovenable, *adj.* unfit (for good), Bo. IV. p. vi. 366.
Uncunninge, *adj.* ignorant, Bo. I. p. i. 75.
Undefouled, undefiled, Bo. II. p. iv. 27.
Undepartable, *adj.* inseparable, Bo. IV. p. iii. 70.
Undergrowe, *pp.* undergrown, A 156.
Undermeles, *s. pl.* morning meal-time, D 875.
Undern, *s.* a particular period of the day, generally from 9 A.M. to midday; it here probably means the beginning of that period, or a little after 9 A.M., E 260, 981.
Undernom, *pt. s.* perceived, G 243.
Underput, *pp.* subjected, Bo. I. p. vi. 109.
Underpyghte, *pt. s.* stuffed, filled underneath, B 789.
Underspore, *v.* lever up, A 3465.
Understonde, *v.* to understand, E 20; Understondeth, *pr. pl.* understand, C 646.
Undertake, *v.* to affirm, E 803; 1 *pr. s.* I am bold to say, B 3516.
Undigne, *adj.* unworthy, E 359.
Undirfongeth, *pr. s.* undertakes, R. 5709.
Undo, *ger.* unfold, reveal, M. P. iii. 899.
Undoutous, *adj.* undoubting, Bo. V. p. i. 35.
Uneschewably, *adv.* inevitably, Bo. V. p. iii. 148.
Uneschuable, *adj.* inevitable, Bo. V. p. i. 117.
Unespyed, *pp.* undiscovered, T. iv. 1457.
Unethe, *adv.* scarcely; *wel unethe*, scarcely at all, H. F. 2041; Unethes, with difficulty, H. F. 900.
Unfamous, *adj.* lost to fame, forgotten by fame, H. F. 1146.
Unfestlich, *adj.* unfestive, jaded, F 366.
Ungiltif, *adj.* innocent, T. iii. 1018.
Un-grobbed, *pp.* not digged round, M. P. ix. 14.
Unhappe, *s.* misfortune, M. P. xvi. 29; Unhappes, *pl.* mishaps, T. ii. 456.
Unhele, *s.* misfortune, sickness, C 116.
Universitee, *s.* the universal, Bo. V. p. iv. 205.
Unkinde, *adj.* unnatural, B 88.
Unkindely, *adv.* unkindly, H. F. 295; unnaturally, C 485.
Unkindenesse, *s.* unkindness, B 1057; unnatural conduct, L. 153.
Unknowe, *pp.* unknown, L. 2034.
Unkonninge, *adj.* stupid, T. v. 1139.
Unkorven, *pp.* uncut, untrimmed, M. P. ix. 14.
Unkouth, *adj.* strange, T. ii. 151.
Unlaced, *pp.* disentangled, Bo. III. p. xii. 184.
Unlefulle, *adj.* unlawful, R. 4880.
Unmerie, *adj.* sad, H. F. 74.
Unmete, *adj.* unfit, M. P. vi. 75.
Unneste, *imp.* quit thy nest, T. iv. 305.
Unnethe, *adv.* scarcely, M. P. iii. 712; scarcely, hardly, with difficulty, B 1050, 1816; Unneth, M. P. iii. 270.
Unparigal, *adj.* unequal, Bo. III. p. i. 13.
Unpleyten, *v.* unplait, explain, unfold, Bo. II. p. viii. 12.
Unpurveyed, *adj.* unprovided, uncared for, Bo. II. p. i. 24.
Unraced, *adj.* unbroken, untorn, Bo. IV. p. i. 60.
Unreprovable, *adj.* without reproach, L. 691.

Unresty, *adj.* restless, T. v. 1355.
Unrightful, *adj.* wicked, L. 1771.
Unsad, *adj.* unsettled, E 995.
Unscience, *s.* unreal knowledge, no knowledge, Bo. V. p. iii. 125.
Unselinesse, *s.* unhappiness, Bo. IV. p. iv. 42.
Unsely, *adj.* unhappy, Bo. II. p. iv. 10.
Unset, *adj.* unappointed, A 1524.
Unshette, *pp.* not shut, H. F. 1953.
Unsittinge, *adj.* unbefitting, T. ii. 307.
Unskilfully, *adv.* unreasonably, Bo. I. p. iv. 249.
Unslekked, *adj.* unslacked, G 806.
Unsolempne, *adj.* uncelebrated, Bo. I. p. iii. 73.
Unspeedful, *adj.* unprofitable, Bo. V. p. vi. 377.
Unsperd, *pp.* unlocked, R. 2656.
Unstaunchable, *adj.* inexhaustible, Bo. II. p. vii. 138.
Unstaunched, *adj.* insatiate, Bo. II. p. vi. 126.
Unstedfastnesse, *s.* inconstancy, L. (A) 526.
Unswete, *adj.* bitter, dreadful, H. F. 72.
Unthank, *s.* ingratitude, little thank, T. v. 699.
Unthriftily, *adv.* poorly, G 893.
Unto, *conj.* until, M. P. v. 647.
Untressed, *pp.* with hair not done up into tresses, M. P. v. 268.
Untretable, *adj.* inexorable, Bo. II. p. viii. 3.
Untrewe, *adj.* untrue, false, B 3218.
Untrouthe, *s.* untruth, deceit, faithlessness, L. 1677: untruth, B 687.
Unwar, *adj.* unexpected, B 427.
Unweldy, *adj*, unwieldy, difficult to move, H 55.
Unwemmed, *pp.* unspotted, spotless, M. P. i. 91; G 137, 225.
Unwened, *adj.* unexpected, Bo. IV. p. vi. 285.
Unwist, *adj.* ignorant, T. i. 93; unknown; *unwist of*, unknown by, L. 1653.
Unwit, *s.* folly, M. P. iv. 271.
Unwot, *pr. s.* fails to know, Bo. V. p. vi. 198.
Unwrye, *v.* uncover, T. i. 858.
Unwys, *adj.* unwise, foolish, M. P. xvii. 27.
Unyolden, without yielding, A 2642.
Up, *prep.* upon, M. P. iii. 750; up with, H. F. 1021; Up and down, here and there, M. P. iv. 210; Up so down, topsy-turvy, M. P. xv. 5.
Up-bounde, *pp.* bound up, T. iii. 517.
Upbreyde, *v.* upbraid, reproach, M. P. vii. 118.
Up-drow, *pt. s.* drew up, L. 1459.
Up-enbossed, *pp.* raised, embossed, L. 1200.
Up frete, *v.* eat up, T. v. 1470.
Up-haf, *pt. s.* uplifted, A 2428.
Upon, *prep.* concerning; *upon her lye*, tell lies about her, M. P. iii. 1023.
Upper, *adv. comp.* higher, H. F. 884, 961.
Up-reysed, *pp.* raised, L. 1163.
Uprist, *pr. s.* upriseth, M. P. iv. 4; Up-rist, *pr. s.* rises up, L. 1188.
Upryght, *adv.* upright, M. P. iii. 622; Upright, flat on the back, A 4194.
Up-so-doun, *adv.* upside down, A 1377.
Upsterte, *pt. s.* upstarted, arose, A 1080.
Up-yaf, *pt. s.* yielded up, A 2427.
Urchouns, *s. pl.* hedgehogs, R. 3135.
Usage, *s.* custom, habit, M. P. v. 15.
Usaunce, *s.* custom, L. 586, 1476.
Useth, *pr. s.* is accustomed, L. 364; **Useden**, *pt. pl.* were accustomed, L. 787.
Utter, *adj.* outer, R. 4208.

V.

Vache, *s.* cow, beast, M. P. xiii. 22.
Vailith, *pr. s.* availe, R. 5765.
Valance, *s.* (possibly) sign of the zodiac opposite the mansion of a planet, M. P. iv. 145.
Valey, *s.* valley, M. P. iii. 165.
Vane, *s.* weather-vane, E 996.
Variaunt, *adj.* varying, changing, changeable, fickle, G 1175.
Vassalage, *s.* prowess, R. 5871; L. 1667.
Vavasour, *s.* landholder, A 360.
Vekke, *s.* old woman, R. 4286.
Veluettes, *pl.* velvets, F 644.
Vendable, *adj.* salable, R. 5804.
Venerye, *s.* hunting, A 166, 2308.
Vengeresses, *s. pl.* avengeresses, avenging deities, Bo. III. m. xii. 42.
Venim, *s.* venom, poison, A 2751.
Venimous, *adj.* poisonous, M. P. i. 149.
Venquisshed, *pp.* vanquished, M. P. i. 8.
Ventusinge, *s.* cupping, A 2747.
Ver, *s.* spring, T. i. 157.
Veray, *adj.* very, true, real, L. 1068.
Verdegrees, *s.* verdigris, G 791.
Verdit, *s.* verdict, A 787.
Verger, *s.* orchard, R. 3234; Vergere, R. 3618.
Vermayle, *adj.* red, R. 3645.
Vermyne, *s.* vermin, E 1095.
Vernage, *s.* white wine, B 1261.
Vernicle, *s.* copy of the handkerchief with the impression of the face of the Saviour, A 685.
Verray, *adj.* exact, H. F. 1079; Verrey, very, true, M. P. i. 21; Verray, very, true; *verray force*, main force, B 3237.
Verrayly, *adv.* verily, truly, M. P. ii. 73.
Verrayment, *adv.* truly, B 1903.
Verre, *s.* glass, T. ii. 869.
Vertu, *s.* mental faculty, H. F. 550; virtue, F 593; *vertu plese*, satisfy virtue, be virtuous, E 216; magic power, magic influence, F 146, 157.
Vertuous, *adj.* skilled, R. 2311.
Verye, guard (?), A 3485.
Vese, *s.* a rush of wind, draught, gush, A 1985.

Vessel, *s.* (*collectively*) vessels, plate, B 3338.
Vestiment, *s.* clothing, robes, F 59.
Veyn, *adj.* vain, M. P. i. 71; vain, empty, powerless, silly, G 497.
Veyne-blood, *s.* blood of the veins, A 2747.
Viage, *s.* journey, voyage, B 259; Viages, *pl.* travels, H. F. 1962.
Vicaire, *s.* deputy, deputed ruler, M. P. i. 140; Vicary, victor, I 22.
Victor, *s. as adj.* of victory, M. P. v. 182.
Vilanye, *s.* vileness, H. F. 96; villanous action, deed of a churl, L. 1823; wrong, L. 2541; evildoing, B 1681.
Vileins, *gen.* of a villain, churl, L. 1824.
Vileinye, *s.* discourtesy, C 740; licentiousness, G 231.
Violes, *s. pl.* vials, phials, G 793.
Virelayes, *pl.* virelays, poems with a *veer* or turn, L. 423.
Viritrate, *s.* hag, D 1582.
Visage, *s.* face, M. P. iii. 895.
Vitaile, *s.* victuals, food, M. P. ix. 38; L. 1488; Vitaille, E 59, 265.
Vitaile, *v.* provide with victuals, L. 1093; Vitailled, *pp.* provisioned, B 869.
Vitremyte, *s.* woman's cap, B 3562.
Voide, *adj.* solitary, M. P. iv. 114.
Voided, *pp.* cleared, emptied, L. 2625.
Vois, *s.* voice, M. P. i. 115.
Voltor, *s.* vulture, Bo. III. m. xii. 51.
Voluntee, *s.* will, R. 5276.
Voluper, *s.* cap, A 3241.
Vouched, *pt. s.* vouched; *vouched sauf*, vouched (as) safe, vouchsafed, M. P. i. 27, 57; Vouchesauf, 2 *pr. pl.* deign to give, M. P. vii. 254; Voucheth sauf, *imp. pl.* vouchsafe, M. P. xix. 8; Vouche-sauf, *v.* vouchsafe, permit, L. 2273; 2 *pr. pl.* deign, L. 2038.
Voyde, *s.* sleeping cup, T. iii. 674.
Voyden, *v.* to get rid of, E 910; F 188; *imp. s.* depart from, E 806; Voydeth, *imp. pl.* send away, G 1136.
Voys, *s.* voice, F 99; rumor, E 629.
Vyce, *s.* vice, fault, M. P. iv. 261.
Vyne, *s.* vine, M. P. v. 181.

W.

Waast, *s.* waist, B 1890.
Wachet, *s.* blue cloth, A 3321.
Waf, *pt. s.* wove, L. 2364. See **Weven**.
Wafereres, *s. pl.* makers of *gaufres* or wafer-cakes, confectioners, C 479.
Wages, *pl.* pay, recompense, M. P. iv. 244.
Waiten, *v.* attend on, L. 1269; Waiteth, *pr. s.* watches, E 708.
Wake, *v.* be awake, lie awake, M. P. xviii. 27; Waked, *pp.* kept wake, caroused, M. P. iii. 977; Waken, *v. act.* to awake, B 1187.
Waker, *adj.* vigilant, M. P. v. 358.
Waking, *s.* watching, being awake, M. P. iii. 611; Wakinge, a keeping awake, period of wakefulness, B 22.
Wal, *s.* wall, E 1047.
Walked, *pp.* having walked, M. P. iii. 387.
Walsh-note, *gen.* walnut's, H. F. 1281.
Walwe, *v.* wallow, T. i. 699; Walweth, *pr. s.* tosses (lit. wallows), L. 1166; Walwinge, *pres. part.* causing to roll, Bo. I. m. vii. 4.
Wan, *pt. s.* won, B 3337.
Wanges, *s. pl.* cheek-teeth, A 4030.
Wang-tooth, *s.* molar tooth, B 3234.
Wanhope, *s.* despair, A 1249.
Wanie, *v.* wane, A 2078.
Wante, 1 *pr. s.* lack, have not, M. P. v. 287; Wanten, 2 *pr. pl.* are lacking, M. P. ii. 76; Wante, *v.* be wanting, be absent, L. 361.
Wantown, *adj.* wanton, free, unrestrained, A 208; Wantoun, E 236.
Wantownesse, *s.* wantonness, A 264.
Wantrust, *adj.* distrustful, H 281.
War, *adj.* aware; *was I war*, I noticed, saw, M. P. v. 218, 298; *I was war*, M. P. iii. 445; aware, L. 1741; *be war fro*, be on guard against, L. 473; *be war*, beware, take heed, B 119; *beth ware*, B 1629.
War, *imp. s. as pl.*; *war yow*, take care of yourselves, make way, B 1889.
Warde, *s. dat.*; *on warde*, into his keeping, M. P. iii. 248.
Wardecors, *s.* bodyguard, D 359.
Warderere, look out behind, A 4101.
Wardeins, *pl.* guardians, L. 753.
Wardrobe, *s.* privy, B 1762.
Ware, *adj.* aware. See **War**.
Ware, *imp.* beware, B 4146.
Ware, *s.* merchandise, B 140.
Warente, *v.* to warrant, protect, C 338.
Wariangles, *s. pl.* butcher birds, D 1408.
Warien, *v.* curse, T. ii. 1619; Warie, 1 *pr. s.* I curse, B 372.
Warisoun, *s.* reward, R. 1537.
Warisshe, *v.* recover, B 2172; Warished, *pp.* cured, M. P. iii. 1104.
Warisshinge, *s.* healing, B 2205.
Warly, *adv.* warily, T. iii. 454.
Warne, *v.* reject, M. P. i. 11; 2 *pr. s. subj.* give notice to, H. F. 893; Warne, *v.* refuse, L. (A) 438; 1 *pr. s.* I warn, I bid you take heed, B 16, 1184. See **Werne**.
Warnestore, *ger.* to garrison, B 2521; Warnestored, *pp.* provisioned, Bo. I. p. iii. 97.
Waryce, *v.* heal, cure, C 906.
Wasshe, *pp.* washed, C 353.
Wast, *s.* waste, B 1609.

Wastel-breed, *s.* cake of fine flour, A 147.
Wawe, *s.* wave, B 508; Wawes, *pl.* M. P. ix. 21; L. 865; B 468.
Waxe, *v.* grow, M. P. iii. 415; Waxen, *pp.* become, M. P. iii. 414.
Wayk, *adj.* weak, L. 2428; B 1671.
Wayn, *s.* car, Bo. IV. m. i. 38.
Wayte, *imp. s.* look out for, await, H. F. 342; Wayten, *v.* to watch, F 444; Wayteth, *pr. s.* B 3331. See Waiten.
Webbe, *s.* weaver, A 362.
Wedde, *s. dat.* pledge, A 1218.
Wede, *s.* a 'weed,' a garment, A 1006; B 2107.
Weder, *s.* weather, F 52.
Wedercok, *s.* weathercock, M. P. xxi. 12.
Weders, *pl.* storms, M. P. v. 681.
Wedres, *pl.* weathers, R. 73.
Weel, *adv.* well, L. 335. See Wel.
Weep, *pt. s.* wept, M. P. iii. 107; vii. 138; L. 846, 1732, 2706.
Weeply, *adj.* tearful, sorrowful, Bo. I. p. i. 3.
Weet, *s.* wet, B 3407.
Weex, *pt. s.* waxed, grew, G 513.
Wegge, *s.* wedge, As. i. 14, 6.
Wel, *adv.* certainly, M. P. iii. 1117; *to be wel*, to be well off, M. P. iii. 845; well, much, L. 1386; many, L. 11; certainly, L. 452; *wel unethe*, scarcely at all, L. (A) 33; well, B 25; very, as in *wel royal*, very royal, F 26; about (used with numbers), F 383; certainly, by all means, E 635.
Welawey, *int.* wellaway! alas! M. P. vii. 338; H. F. 318.
Welde, *s.* weld, the name of a plant, M. P. ix. 17.
Welde, *s.* rule, D 271.
Welde, *v.* wield, L. 2000; *pt. s.* wielded, overpowered, B 3452.
Weldy, *adj.* powerful, T. ii. 636.
Wele, *s.* weal, good, well-being, M. P. iii. 603; good fortune, L. 1234; prosperity, B 175.
Wele, *adv.* well, M. P. iii. 643.
Welefulnesse, *s.* happiness, Bo. I. p. iii. 40.
Welful, *adj.* full of weal, blessed, B 451.
Wel-faring, *adj.* well-faring, thriving, prosperous, B 3132.
Welk, 1 *pt. s.* walked, T. v. 1235.
Welked, *pp.* withered, C 738.
Welken, *s.* heaven, sky, H. F. 1601; Welkne, M. P. x. 62.
Welle, *s.* well, source, M. P. i. 126.
Welmeth, *pr. s.* wells, R. 1561.
Welnigh, *adv.* well nigh, M. P. iv. 253.
Welte, *pt. s.* wielded, *i.e.* lorded it over, possessed for use, B 3200.
Wel-willy, *adj.* benevolent, T. iii. 1257.
Wem, *s.* injury, hurt, F 121.
Wemmelees, *adj.* stainless, G 47.
Wenche, *s.* wench, woman, H. F. 206.
Wende, *v.* go, I. 2266; *pt. s.* was going, H. F. 298; Wente him, *pt. s.* turned himself, *i.e.* went his way, G 1110; Went, *pp.* gone, L. 1651; *ben went*, are gone, B 173; *is went*, is gone, G 534.
Wene, *s.* doubt, R. 574.
Wenen, *v.* consider, L. 12; Wenest, 2 *pr. s.* thinkest, supposest, M. P. iii. 744; Weninge, *pres. pt.* H. F. 262; Wende, 1 *pt. s.* I thought, M. P. v. 493; *pt. s.* weened, supposed, M. P. i. 93; expected, L. 1913; supposed, L. 1048; Wenden, *pt. pl.* M. P. iii. 867; Wene, *imp. pl* suppose, L. 188; Weneth, *pr. s.* imagines, C 569.
Wenged, *adj.* winged, H. F. 2118.
Wente, *pt. s.* went, M. P. iii. 397. See Wende.
Wente, *s.* footpath, M. P. xviii. 69; turn, passage, T. ii. 815; iii. 787.
Wepen, *s.* weapon, M. P. i. 118; L. 2010.
Wepen, *pr. pl.* weep, B 820; *pp.* wept, T. i. 941; Wepte, *pt. s.* wept, B 267.
Werbul, *s.* song, T. ii. 1033.
Werche, *v.* to work, make, do, perform, B 566; G 14.
Werdes, *s. pl.* fates, destinies, Bo. I. m. i. 15.
Were, *s.* danger, R. 2827.
Were, *s.* weir, M. P. v. 138; weir, pool, T. iii. 35.
Were, *s.* doubt, M. P. iii. 1295; H. F. 979; doubt, distress, mental struggle, L. 2686.
Were, *ger.* to wear, L. 1132; Wered, *pp.* worn, B 3515.
Were, 2 *pt. s.* wast, M. P. i. 59; Wern, *pt. pl.* were, M. P. iii. 1289; Weren, 1 *pt. pl. subj.* should be, M. P. i. 180.
Werk, *s.* work, *i.e.* reality, practice, F 482; Werkes, *s. pl.* deeds, actions, M. P. iii. 801.
Werking, *s.* work, mode of operation, G 1367.
Werne, *v.* deny, refuse, H. F. 1797; turn away, refuse, T. iv. 111.
Werre, *adv.* worse, M. P. iii. 616.
Werre, *s.* war, M. P. iii. 625; *to werre*, in enmity, M. P. i. 116.
Werrey, *v.* make war on, persecute, R. 6926; Werreyd, *pp.* persecuted, R. 2078; Werreye, *v.* carry on war, fight, M. P. ix. 25; Werreyest, 2 *pr. s.* makest war against, L. 322; Werreyed, *pt. s.* made war upon, warred against, F 10.
Werreyour, *s.* warrior, L. 597.
Wers, *adj. comp.* worse, M. P. iii. 1118; *adv.* M. P. iii. 814; Werste, *superl.* worst, M. P. iii. 1174.
Werte, *s.* wart, A 555.
Wery, *adj.* weary, M. P. iii. 127; B 2111.
Wesh, *pt. s.* washed, B 3934. See Wasshe.
West, *s. as adv.* in the west, F 459.
Weste, *ger.* to draw near the west, M. P. v. 266; *v.* turn to the west, L. 61, 197.

Wete, *adj. pl.* wet, M. P. iv. 89.
Wete, *s.* wet, perspiration, G 1187.
Weven, *v.* weave, L. 2352; Waf, *pt. s.* L. 2364.
Wex, *s.* wax, G 1164, 1268; Wexe, L. 2004.
Wexe, *v.* grow, become, M. P. iii. 497; Wexeth, *pr. s.* grows, H. F. 1076; Wex, *pt. s.* grew, M. P. iii. 1300; Wexen, *pr. pl.* become, L. 2240.
Wey, *s.* way, M. P. i. 75; Weyes, *pl.* M. P. iii. 1272; *by al weyes*, in all things, M. P. iii. 1271; *a furlong wey*, a small distance, a short time, E 516; Weye, *dat.* on (his) way, F 604.
Weyen, *v.* weigh; *oghte weyen*, he ought to weigh, L. 398.
Weyk, *adj.* weak, M. P. vii. 341.
Weyked, *pp.* weakened, R. 4737.
Weylaway, *interj.* wellaway, M. P. iii. 729.
Weymentinge, *s.* lamentation, R. 510.
Weynes, *s. pl.* chariots, Bo. IV. m. v. 7.
Weyve, *v.* relinquish, waive, cast aside, M. P. vii. 299; forsake, G 476.
Whan, *conj.* when, M. P. iii. 1236.
What, whatever, M. P. iv. 170; What . . . what, partly . . . partly, H. F. 2058; What so, whatever, M. P. ii. 99; What, what sort of a, L. 1305; *conj.* why, L. 2025; *interj.* what! how! L. 1800.
Wheel, *s.* orbit, H. F. 1450; circle, H. F. 794; Whele, wheel, M. P. iii. 644.
Wheelen, *v.* wheel, T. i. 139.
Whennes, *adv.* whence, M. P. xvi. 6.
Wher, *conj.* whether, M. P. iii. 91; H. F. 586.
Wherfor that, wherefore is it that, why, M. P. iii. 1034.
Wher-so, *adv.* where-soever, M. P. iii. 10; whithersoever, M. P. ii. 102; Wher that, wherever, M. P. v. 172.
Wher-through, *adv.* by means of which, M. P. iii. 120.
Wherto, *adv.* for what purpose, M. P. iii. 670.
Whete, *s.* wheat, I 36.
Whetston, *s.* whetstone, T. i. 631.
Which, *pron.* what kind of, L. 1883; Whiche a, what kind of a, what a, M. P. iii. 734; Whiche, what sort of, what fine, M. P. iii. 859.
Whider, *adv.* whither, M. P. i. 124.
Whippes, *gen.* whip's, M. P. v. 178.
Who, *pron. indef.* one who, M. P. iii. 559; Whos, *gen.* whose, M. P. iv. 132.
Whom, *i.e.* one who, L. 1955.
Whyl, *conj.* whilst, M. P. iii. 1124.
Whyle, *s.* time, L. 2227.
Whyl-er, *adv.* formerly, G 1328.
Whyles, *gen. s. as adv.* while, time; *the whyles*, whilst, M. P. iii. 152.
Whylom, *adv.* formerly, once, M. P. iv. 29; L. 1005.
Whyte, *adj. pl.* white, M. P. iii. 1318.
Widwe, *s.* widow, C 450.
Widwehed, *s.* widowhood, L. (A) 295.
Wierdes, *s. pl.* fates, T. iii. 617.
Wight, *s.* man, creature, person, L. 15; B 656; Wightes, *pl.* beings, people, men, M. P. iii. 579.
Wighte, *s. dat.* weight, T. ii. 1385.
Wike, *s.* week, C 362.
Wiket, *s.* wicket-gate, H. F. 477.
Wikke, *adj.* wicked, bad, M. P. i. 44; poor, much alloyed, H. F. 1346.
Wil, 1 *pr. s.* desire, wish for, M. P. vii. 244.
Wildnesse, *s.* wilderness, M. P. ix. 34.
Wilful, *adj.* voluntary, Bo. III. p. xi. 188.
Wilfulhed, *s.* wilfulness, L. (A) 355.
Wille, *s.* will, M. P. i. 45, 57.
Wilne, 1 *pr. s.* desire, H. F. 1094; Wilnen, *pr. pl.* H. F. 1312; Wilned, 1 *pt. s.* M. P. iii. 1262.
Wilninge, *s.* willing, wishing, Bo. III. p. xi. 100; *pl.* desires, Bo. III. p. xi. 197.
Wiltow, *for* Wilt thou, *i.e.* wishest thou, B 2116.
Wimpel, *s.* wimple, veil, L. 813, 847.
Wimpleth, *pr. s.* conceals (as with a wimple), Bo. II. p. i. 71.
Windas, *s.* windlass, F 184.
Wind-melle, *s.* wind-mill, H. F. 1280.
Windre, *v.* trim, R. 1020.
Windy, *adj.* unstable as wind, Bo. II. p. viii. 30.
Winke, *v.* shut the eyes and so sleep, fall asleep, M. P. ii. 109; 1 *pr. s.* sleep, M. P. v. 482.
Winsinge, *adj.* lively, A 3263.
Winter, *pl.* years, M. P. v. 473.
Wirche, *v. inf. in passive sense*, to be made, H. F. 474.
Wirdes, *pl.* Fates, L. 2580.
Wirkinge, *s.* efficiency, Bo. III. p. xi. 29.
Wis, *adv.* surely, certainly, T. ii. 887.
Wisly, *adv.* surely, H. F. 1860.
Wisse, *imp. s.* direct, guide, M. P. i. 155; 2 *pr. s. subj.* teach, M. P. v. 74; *ger.* teach, instruct, H. F. 491; *v.* guide, T. i. 622.
Wissh, *pt. s.* washed, R. 96.
Wiste, *pt. s.* knew, M. P. iii. 591.
Wit, *s.* wisdom, M. P. iii. 898; mind, M. P. iii. 990; feeling, M. P. vi. 106; Wittes, *pl.* senses, M. P. vi. 98.
Wite, *ger.* to know, M. P. ii. 87; Witeth, *imp. pl.* M. P. vi. 96; Witen, *v.* know, L. 7; Wiste, *pt. s.* knew, L. 853.
With, *prep.* by, M. P. v. 248; L. 266.
With-alle, *adv.* withal, M. P. iii. 1205; L. 1603.
With-holden, *pp.* retained (in the legal sense), L. 192.
Withinne-forth, *adv.* within, Bo. V. p. v. 15.
Withouten, *prep.* without, L. 177.
With-seye, *v.* refuse, L. 367.
With-stonde, *pp.* withstood, L. 1186.
Witnesfully, *adv.* publicly, Bo IV. p. v. 13.
Witterly, *adv.* plainly, truly, L. 2606.

Wivere, *s.* viper, T. iii. 1010.
Wlatsom, *adj.* loathsome, B 4243.
Wo, *s.* woe, sorrow; *me is wo*, I am sorry, M. P. iii. 566.
Wo, *adj.* sad, grieved, M. P. iii. 896; wretched, M. P. ii. 3.
Wode, *s.* wood, M. P. iii. 414.
Wode, *adj. pl.* mad, H. F. 1809. See **Wood**.
Wodewales, *s. pl.* orioles, R. 658.
Wol, *pr. s.* desires, wills, M. P. i. 167; **Wolt**, 2 *pr. s.* wilt, M. P. i. 10; **Wolde**, *pt. s.* would gladly, wished to, M. P. iv. 124; *god wolde*, would God, M. P. iii. 665; **Woldest**, 2 *pt. s.* wouldst, M. P. iii. 561; **Wold**, *pp.* willed, M. P. xviii. 11; wished, L. 1209; **Woldestow**, if thou wouldst, L. 760; **Wol**, *pr. s.* permits, H 28; *wol adoun*, is about to set, I 72; **Wole**, *pr. pl.* will, B 468; **Woltow**, wilt thou, G 307.
Wolle, *s.* wool, L. 1721.
Wombe, *s.* the belly, C 522.
Wommanhede, *s.* womanhood, B 851.
Wommen, *pl.* women, L. 484.
Wond, *pt. s.* wound, L. 2253.
Wonde, *v.* desist, L. 1187.
Wonder, *s. as adj.* a wonder, strange, M. P. iii. 233; *as adv.* wondrously, M. P. iii. 344.
Wonder-most, *adj. sup.* most wonderful, H. F. 2059.
Wone, *s.* habit, custom, H. F. 76.
Woned, *pt. s.* dwelt, M. P. iii. 889; *pp.* accustomed, M. P. iii. 150; **Wonen**, *pr. pl.* dwell, L. 1317; **Woneden**, *pt. pl.* dwelt, L. 712.
Wonger, *s.* pillow, B 2102.
Woninge, *s.* dwelling, abode, M. P. i. 145.
Wonne, *pp.* won, M. P. v. 105; gained, *i.e.* approached, M. P. iv. 31; begotten, L. 2564.
Wood, *adj.* mad, M. P. iii. 104; H. F. 202; mad, fierce, madly wroth, L. 624; *ten so wood*, ten times as fierce, L. 736.
Wood, *s.* woad, M. P. ix. 17.
Woodeth, *pr. s.* plays the madman, acts madly, G 467.
Woodly, *adv.* madly, L. 1752.
Woodnesse, *s.* madness, C 496.
Wook, 1 *pt. s.* awoke, M. P. v. 695.
Woon, *s.* plenty, R. 1673; quantity, abundance, M. P. iii. 475; dwelling, house, H. F. 1166; hope, T. iv. 1181; number, L. 2161.
Woot, *pr. s.* knows, M. P. ii. 30. See **Wite**, **Wost**.
Wopen, *pp.* wept, F 523.
Worcher, *s.* worker, maker, M. P. iv. 261.
Worcheth, *pr. s.* works, M. P. iii. 815.
Worching, *s.* working, influence, M. P. v. 5.
Word, *s.* for Ord, beginning, T. iii. 702.
Worde, *dat.* word, saying, M. P. iii. 1311; **Wordes**, *pl.* words; *at shorte wordes*, shortly, L. 2462.
Worldes, *gen.* of the world, M. P. v. 53.
Worm-foul, *s.* birds which eat worms, M. P. v. 505.
Wort, *s.* unfermented beer, wort, G 813.
Wortes, *s. pl.* roots, vegetables, E 226.
Worthe, *ger.* to become, M. P. iv. 248; *wel worthe*, may good befall, H. F. 53; *worth upon*, gets upon, B 1941.
Wost, 2 *pr. s.* knowest, H. F. 729; **Wostow**, *for* Wost thou, knowest thou, M. P. iii. 1152; **Wot**, 1 *pr. s.* know, M. P. i. 10.
Wot. See **Wost**.
Wounde, *s.* wound, M. P. i. 79; *gen.* wound's, H. F. 374; Woundes of Egipte, *pl.* plagues of Egypt; unlucky days so-called, M. P. iii. 1207.
Wowe, *v.* woo, T. v. 791; **Wowed**, *pp.* wooed, L. 1247.
Wowing, *s.* wooing, L. 1553.
Woxen, *pp.* grown, H. F. 2082; **Woxe**, become, H. F. 1494.
Wrak, *s.* wreck, B 513.
Wrastling, *s.* wrestling, M. P. v. 165.
Wratthed, *pp.* made angry, M. P. iii. 1151.
Wraw, *adj.* savage, fierce, angry, H 46.
Wrecche, *s.* unhappy being, M. P. iii. 577.
Wreche, *s.* vengeance, M. P. xvi. 30.
Wreek, *imp. s.* wreak, avenge, B 3095.
Wreen, *v.* cover, R. 56.
Wreigh, *pt. s.* covered, T. iii. 1056.
Wreke, *v.* revenge, L. 395; *ger.* to avenge, L. 1901.
Wreker, *s.* avenger, M. P. v. 361.
Wrenche, *s.* deceit, R. 4292; **Wrenches**, *s. pl.* frauds, stratagems, tricks, G 1081.
Wreying, *s.* betrayal, R. 5220.
Wroghte, *pt. s.* was making, was working at, L. 1721; *pt. pl.* (they) effected, L. 1696.
Wroken, *pp.* avenged, T. i. 88.
Wroot, *pt. s.* wrote, M. P. i. 59.
Wrooth, *adj.* wroth, angry, M. P. iii. 513.
Wroteth, *pr.*'*s.* digs with the snout, I 157.
Wry, *imp. s.* cover up, L. 735; **Wryen**, *v.* cover, R. 6683; **Wrye**, *pp.* hidden, T. iii. 620.
Wrye, *v.* turn, twist, T. ii. 906.
Wryen, *v.* turn aside, M. P. iii. 627.
Wryth, *pr. s.* winds, T. iii. 1231; **Wrytheth**, *pr. s.* writhes out, throws forth wreaths of smoke, Bo. I. m. iv. 11.
Wyde-where, *adv.* widely, T. iii. 404.
Wyf, *s.* woman, M. P. iii. 1037; wife, M. P. iii. 1082.
Wyflees, *adj.* wifeless, E 1236.
Wyfly, *adj.* wifelike, E 429.
Wyle, *s.* wile, guile, M. P. v. 215.
Wynde, *v.* wind, intertwine, M. P. v. 671; *ger.* turn, roam about, L. 818; **Wynt**, *pr. s.* turns, directs, L. 85; **Wond**, *pt. s.* wound, L. 2253.
Wyr, *s.* wire; bit, L. 1205.

Wyse, *s.* wise, way, M. P. i. 34; *dat.* manner, way, L. 20.
Wyse, *adj.* wise, M. P. vi. 32; *pl. as s.* wise people, M. P. xvii. 20.
Wyser, *adj. comp.* wiser, *i.e.* wiser course, L. 2634.
Wyte, *s.* blame, reproach, M. P. vii. 268.
Wyte, *v.* blame, reproach, M. P. vii. 110.
Wyve, *dat.* wife, L. 1304.

Y.

Y-, prefix to past participles. See below.
Yaf, *pt. s.* gave, M. P. iii. 1269; Yave, 2 *pt. s.* gavest, M. P. xvii. 19. See Yeve.
Yald, *pt. s.* afforded, Bo. IV. m. vii. 28.
Yalt, *pt. s.* yielded; *yalt him*, betook himself, R. 4904.
Yare, *adj.* ready, L. 2270.
Yates, *pl. gen.* gates', H. F. 1301.
Y-bake, *pp.* baked, L. 709.
Y-banisht, *pp.* banished, L. 1863.
Y-be, *pp.* been, H. F. 411, 1733.
Y-benched, *pp.* furnished with benches, L. (A) 98. See Benched.
Y-bete, *pp.* beaten, H. F. 1041; ornamented by means of the hammer, hence, struck, coined, L. 1122.
Y-blent, *pp.* blinded, deceived, M. P. iii. 647.
Y-blessed, *pp.* blessed, H 99.
Y-bleynt, *pp.* blenched, started aside, A 3753.
Y-blowe, *pp.* blown, H. F. 1664; bruited by fame, H. F. 1139.
Y-bore, *pp.* borne, H. F. 590; Y-boren, born, C 704.
Y-bounden, *pp.* bound, M. P. v. 268.
Y-bowed, *pp.* diverted, Bo. IV. p. vi. 195.
Y-brent, *pp.* burned, H. F. 940.
Y-broght, *pp.* brought, L. 938.
Y-brouded, *pp.* embroidered, L. (A) 159.
Y-caught, *pp.* caught; *she was y-caught*, the contagion of her charms made itself felt (in me), M. P. iii. 838.
Y-chaped, having *chapes* or caps of metal at the end of a sheath, A 366.
Y-cheyned, *pp.* chained, M. P. xvii. 14.
Y-clad, *pp.* clothed, G 133.
Y-cleped, *pp.* called, H 2; Y-clept, G 772.
Y-comen, *pp.* come, H. F. 1074.
Y-corouned, *pp.* crowned, L. 219.
Y-corumped, *pp.* corrupted, Bo. V. p. ii. 31.
Y-corven, *pp.* cut, G 533.
Y-coupled, *pp.* coupled, wedded, E 1219.
Y-coyned, *pp.* coined, C 770.
Y-crased, *pp.* cracked, broken, M. P. iii. 324.
Y-cristned, *pp.* baptized, B 240.
Y-dampned, *pp.* condemned, L. 2030.
Ydel, *adj.* idle, E 217.
Ydelnesse, *s.* idleness, M. P. iii. 602.
Y-do, *pp.* done, M. P. iii. 1236; finished, M. P. v. 542.
Ydolastre, *s.* an idolater, B 3377.
Ydole, *s.* idol, M. P. iii. 626.
Ydrawe, *pp.* drawn, M. P. vii. 70.
Yë, *s.* eye, M. P. iii. 184; regard, M. P. v. 630; Yën, *pl.* eyes, L. 859.
Ye, *adv.* yea, M. P. v. 52.
Yed, *pp.* eyed, T. iv. 1459.
Yeddinges, *pl.* songs, A 237.
Yede, *pt. s.* went, G 1141.
Yeer, *pl.* years, L. 2075.
Yelden, *v.* to yield, E 843; Yeldeth, *pr. s.* yields, L. 886.
Yeldhalle, *s.* guild-hall, A 370.
Yelding, *s.* produce, yielding, A 596.
Yelleden, *pt. pl.* yelled, B 4579.
Yelpe, *v.* boast, A 2238.
Yelw, *adj.* yellow, M. P. iii. 857.
Yeman, *s.* yeoman, A 101.
Yen, *pl.* eyes. See Yë.
Yerd, *s.* enclosure, yard, R. 492.
Yerde, *s.* rod, *hence* correction, M. P. v. 640; rod, stick, T. ii. 154.
Yeres, *pl. gen.* years', M. P. v. 67.
Yerne, *v.* yearn, M. P. iii. 1092.
Yerne, *adv.* eagerly, with interest, M. P. v. 21; *as yerne*, very eagerly, H. F. 910.
Yeten, *v.* pour, shed, Bo. I. m. vii. 2.
Yeve, *v.* give, M. P. v. 308; Yeven, *pt. pl. subj.* would give, H. F. 1708; *pp.* devoted, M. P. vii. 111; Yeveth, *pr. s.* gives, L. 451; Yaf, *pt. s.* gave, L. 172. See Yive.
Yeving, *s.* giving, what one gives, M. P. iv. 230.
Yexeth, *pr. s.* hiccoughs, A 4151.
Y-falle, *pp.* fallen, M. P. ii. 61.
Y-fare, *pp.* gone, L. 2271.
Y-fere, *adv.* together, L. 263.
Y-fet, *pp.* fetched, G 1116.
Y-fetered, *pp.* fettered, A 1229.
Y-feyned, *pp.* feigned, invented, L. (A) 327.
Y-ficched, *pp.* fixed, Bo. IV. p. vi. 136.
Y-flit, *pp.* moved, whirled along, Bo. I. m. ii. 16.
Y-freten, *pp.* eaten, devoured, L. 1951.
Y-frounced, *pp.* wrinkled, R. 155.
Y-fyred, *pp.* fired, L. 1013.
Y-gerdoned, *pp.* rewarded, Bo. V. p. iii. 201.
Y-glased, *pp.* glazed, M. P. iii. 323.
Y-glewed, *pp.* glued, fixed tight, F 182.
Y-glosed, *pp.* flattered, H 34.
Y-goon, *pp.* gone, L. 2206.
Y-grave, *pp.* dug, dug out, M. P. iii. 164; graven, H. F. 1136.
Y-halwed, *pp.* hallowed, consecrated, L. 1871.
Y-hent, *pp.* seized, caught, C 868.

Y-herd, *pp.* haired, A 3738.
Y-hevied, *pp.* weighed down, Bo. V. m. v. 30.
Y-holde, *pp.* held, restrained, H. F. 1286; indebted, L. 1954; considered, C 602.
Yif, *imp. s.* give, M. P. v. 119.
Yif, *conj.* if, T. ii. 1063; L. 2059.
Yift, *s.* gift, M. P. iii. 247; L. 451.
Yilden, *ger.* to repay, Bo. V. p. i. 16; Yildeth, *pr. s.* yields, produces, Bo. IV. m. vi. 36. See Yelden.
Y-joigned, *pp.* joined, Bo. II. p. vi. 101.
Yis, *adv.* yes, M. P. iii. 526.
Yit, *adv.* yet, notwithstanding, M. P. i. 46.
Yive, *v.* give, M. P. iii. 242; Yiven, *pp.* given, L. 501. See Yeve.
Yiver, *s.* giver, L. 2228.
Y-kneled. *pp.* kneeled, L. 1232.
Y-knit, *pp.* joined, M. P. vi. 32.
Y-knowe, *v.* know, recognize, H. F. 1336.
Y-korven, *pp.* cut, B 1801.
Y-koud, *pp.* been able to know, known well, M. P. iii. 666.
Y-lad, *pp.* carried (in a cart), A 530.
Y-laft, *pp.* left, M. P. iii. 792.
Y-laid, *pp.* laid, L. 2141.
Y-lain, *pp.* lain, remained, L. 2410.
Yle, *s.* island, H. F. 416; region, province, L. 1425.
Y-let, *pp.* hindered, obstructed, Bo. V. p. iv. 37.
Y-leten, *pp.* left, allowed, Bo. IV. p. iv. 347.
Yliche, *adj.* like, similar, H. F. 1328; alike, L. 389.
Yliche, *adv.* alike, equally, M. P. iii. 9.
Y-loren, *pp.* lost, L. 26.
Y-lyke, *adv.* alike, equally, L. 55.
Y-mad, *pp.* made, H. F. 120.
Y-maad, *pp.* made, caused, F. 218.
Ymageries, *pl.* carved work, H. F. 1190.
Y-maked, *pp.* made, L. 122; Y-maad, composed, L. 550.
Y-marked, *pp.* set down, marked out, planned, H. F. 1103.
Y-ment, *pp.* intended, H. F. 1742.
Y-mette, *pp.* met, B 1115.
Y-meynd, *pp.* mingled, mixed, A 2170.
Y-moeved, *pp.* moved, Bo. IV. m. vi. 8.
Ympne, *s.* lyric poem, L. 422.
Y-mused, *pp.* mused, reflected, H. F. 1287.
Y-nogh, *adj.* enough, sufficient, M. P. iii. 965; Y-now, *adj. pl.* M. P. v. 233.
Y-nome, *pp.* taken, M. P. v. 38. *Pp.* of *Nimen*.
Y-now, *adv.* enough, G 864.
Y-offred, *pp.* offered, dedicated, L. 932.
Yolden, *pp.* yielded, A 3052.
Yolle, *pr. pl.* yell, A 2672.
Yond, *adv.* yonder, H. F. 889.
Yore, *adv.* long ago, long, M. P. i. 150; *yore agon*, long ago, M. P. v 17.
Youling, *s.* yelling, A 1278.
Yow, *dat.* to you, M. P. iii. 1321; for yourselves, M. P. iv. 17.
Y-piked, *pp.* picked over, G 941.
Y-plounged, *pp.* plunged, sunk, Bo. III. p. xi. 139.
Y-plyted, *pp.* pleated, gathered, Bo. I. p. ii. 34.
Ypocras, Hippocrates; *hence*, a kind of cordial, C 306.
Y-porveyed, *pp.* foreseen, Bo. V. p. iii. 50.
Y-prayed, *pp.* bidden, invited, E 269.
Y-preised, *pp.* praised, H. F. 1577.
Y-preved, *pp.* proved to be, A 485.
Y-purveyed, *pp.* foreseen, Bo. V. p. iii. 97.
Y-raft, *pp.* reft, robbed. L. 1572. See Reven.
Yre, *s.* ire, anger, vexation, M. P. i. 30.
Y-reke, *pp.* spread about, A 3882.
Yren, *adj.* iron, G 759.
Yren, *s.* iron, G 827.
Y-rent, *pp.* rent, torn, B 844.
Y-ronge, *pp.* rung, told loudly, H. F. 1655.
Y-ronne, *pp.* run, *i.e.* continued, L. 1943.
Y-rouned, *pp.* whispered, H. F. 2107.
Y-sayd, *pp.* said, M. P. iii. 270.
Y-schette, *pp.* shut, B 560.
Yse, *s.* ice, H. F. 1130.
Y-see, *v.* see, M. P. i. 53; Y-seye, *pp.* H. F. 1367; Y-seyn, *pp.* seen. L. 2076.
Y-sene, *adj.* manifest, L. 1394; visible, L. 2655.
Y-set, *pp.* set down, F 173; agreed, fixed, L. 1683.
Y-seye. See Y-see.
Y-seyled, *pp.* sailed, B 4289.
Y-shad, *pp.* scattered, Bo. III. m. ii. 36.
Y-shaken, *pp.* quivering, sparkling, Bo. I. m. iii. 19.
Y-shapen, *pp.* shaped, contrived, G 1080.
Y-shore, *pp.* shorn, shaven, T. iv. 996.
Y-shove, *pp.* borne about, L. 726.
Y-slawe, *pp.* slain, B 484.
Y-smite, *pp.* smitten, wounded, Bo. III. m. vii. 7.
Y-songen, *pp.* sung, L. 270.
Y-spended, *pp.* spent, Bo. V. p. iv. 27.
Y-sprad, *pp.* spread, B 1644.
Y-spreynd, *pp.* sprinkled, A 2169.
Y-spronge, *pp.* sprung, divulged, H. F. 2081.
Y-stalled, *pp.* set in a seat, installed, H. F. 1364.
Y-stiked, *pp.* stabbed, F 1476.
Y-stonge, *pp.* stung, C 355.
Y-storve, *pp.* dead, A 2014.
Y-strawed, *pp.* strewn, bestrewn, M. P. iii. 629.
Y-strike, *pp.* struck, M. P. xi. 34.
Y-sweped, *pp.* swept, G 938.
Y-swowned, *pp.* swooned, L. 1342.
Y-take, *pp.* taken, L. 617.
Y-thewed, *pp.*; *wel y-thewed*, of good thews or customs, M. P. v. 47.
Y-throngen, *pp.* confined, Bo. II. p. vii. 58.

Y-throwe, *pp.* thrown, cast out, M. P. ii. 89.
Y-torned, *pp.* turned, Bo. IV. m. v. 2.
Y-treted, *pp.* discussed, Bo. IV. p. i. 79.
Y-tukked, *pp.* tucked, L. 982.
Yvel, *adv.* ill, E 460.
Yvoire, *s.* ivory, M. P. iii. 946.
Y-waxe, *pp.* grown, become, M. P. iii. 1275.
Y-went, *pp.* gone, H. F. 976.
Y-whet, *pp.* whetted, M. P. vii. 212.
Y-wimpled, *pp.* covered with a wimple, L. 797. See **Wimpel**.
Y-wis, *adv.* certainly, L. 1569. See **Wisly**.
Y-wist, *pp.* known, Bo. V. p. iii. 61.
Y-wonne, *pp.* won, arrived, L. 2427.
Y-worthe, *pp.* become, M. P. iii. 579.
Y-woven, *pp.* woven, L. 2360. *Pp.* of *Weven*.
Y-writhen, *pp.* wrapped, R. 160.
Y-wroght, *pp.* depicted, M. P. iii. 327; Y-wroghte, *pp. pl.* fashioned, M. P. v. 123.
Y-wroken, *pp.* avenged, M. P. xvi. 26. *Pp.* of *Wreken*.
Y-wronge, *pp.* wrung, L. 2527. *Pp.* of *Wringen*.
Y-wrye, *pp.* veiled, hid, T. iv. 1654; Y-wryen, covered over, M. P. iii. 628.